A BOOK OF WORDS

RUDYARD KIPLING

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A book of words

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A BOOK OF WORDS

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A Book of Words
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Captains Courageous
Collected Verse
Day's Work, The
Debits and Credits
Departmental Ditties and Ballads and Barrack-Room Ballads
Diversity of Creatures, A
Eyes of Asia, The
Feet of the Young Men, The
Five Nations, The
France at War
Fringes of the Fleet
From Sea to Sea
History of England, A
Independence
Irish Guards in the Great War, The
Jungle Book, The
Jungle Book, Second
Just So Song Book
Just So Stories
Kim
Kipling Anthology, A Prose and Verse
Kipling Stories and Poems Every Child Should Know
Kipling Birthday Book, The
Land and Sea Tales
Letters of Travel
Life's Handicap: Being Stories of Mine Own People
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Many Inventions
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Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Inclusive Edition, 1885-1926
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Sea Warfare
Seven Seas, The
Soldier Stories
Soldiers Three, The Story of the Gadsbys, and In Black and White
Song of the English, A
Songs for Youth
Songs from Books
Songs of the Sea
Stalky & Co.
Two Jungle Books, The
They
Traffics and Discoveries
Under the Deodars, The Phantom 'Rickshaw, and Wee Willie Winkie
With the Night Mail
Years Between, The

A
BOOK OF WORDS

SELECTIONS FROM SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES
DELIVERED BETWEEN 1906 AND 1927

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

To Demeter the Winnower Heronax dedicates these. But if there be any among them serviceable to a wayfarer, let him also share.

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY, INC.
1928

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I

LITERATURE

I am Earth, overtaking all things except words. They alone escape me.
Therefore, I lie heavy on their makers.

LITERATURE

Royal Academy Dinner: May 1906

A GREAT, and I frankly admit, a somewhat terrifying, honour has come to me; but I think, compliments apart, that the most case-hardened worker in letters, speaking to such an assembly as this, must recognise the gulf that separates even the least of those who do things worthy to be written about from even the best of those who have written things worthy of being talked about.

There is an ancient legend which tells us that when a man first achieved a most notable deed he wished to explain to his Tribe what he had done. As soon as he began to speak, however, he was smitten with dumbness, he lacked words, and sat down. Then there arose—according to the story—a masterless man, one who had taken no part in the action of his fellow, who had no special virtues, but who was afflicted—that is the phrase—with the magic of the necessary word. He saw; he told; he described the merits of the notable deed in such a fashion, we are assured, that the words "became alive and walked up and down in the hearts of all his hearers". Thereupon, the Tribe seeing that the words were certainly alive, and fearing lest the man with the words would hand down untrue tales about them to their children, took and killed him. But, later, they saw that the magic was in the words, not in the man.

We have progressed in many directions since the time

of this early and destructive criticism, but, so far, we do not seem to have found a sufficient substitute for the necessary word as the final record to which all achievement must look. Even to-day, when all is done, those who have done it must wait until all has been said by the masterless man with the words. It is certain that the overwhelming bulk of those words will perish in the future as they have perished in the past; but it is true that a minute fraction will continue to exist, and by the light of these words, and by that light only, will our children be able to judge of the phases of our generation. Now we desire beyond all things to stand well with our children; but when our story comes to be told we do not know who will have the telling of it. We are too close to the tellers; there are many tellers and they are all talking together; and, even if we know them, we must not kill them. But the old and terrible instinct which taught our ancestors to kill the original story-teller warns us that we shall not be far wrong if we challenge any man who shows signs of being afflicted with the magic of the necessary word. May not this be the reason why, without any special legislation on its behalf, Literature has always stood a little outside the law as the one calling that is absolutely free—free in the sense that it needs no protection? For instance, if, as occasionally happens, a Judge makes a bad law, or a surgeon a bad operation, or a manufacturer makes bad food, criticism upon their actions is by law and custom confined to comparatively narrow limits. But if a man, as occasionally happens, makes a book, there is no limit to the criticism that may be directed against it. And this is perfectly as it should be. The world recognises that little things like bad law, bad surgery,

and bad food, affect only the cheapest commodity that we know about—human life. Therefore, in these circumstances, men can afford to be swayed by pity for the offender, by interest in his family, by fear, or loyalty, or respect for the organisation he represents, or even by a desire to do him justice. But when the question is of words—words that may become alive and walk up and down in the hearts of the hearers—it is then that this world of ours, which is disposed to take an interest in its future, feels instinctively that it is better that a thousand innocent people should be punished rather than that one guilty word should be preserved, carrying that which is an untrue tale of the Tribe. The chances, of course, are almost astronomically remote that any given tale will survive for so long as it takes an oak to grow to timber size. But that guiding instinct warns us not to trust to chance a matter of the supremest concern. In this durable record, if anything short of indisputable and undistilled truth be seen there, we all feel, "How shall our achievements profit us?" The Record of the Tribe is its enduring literature.

The magic of Literature lies in the words, and not in any man. Witness, a thousand excellent, strenuous words can leave us quite cold or put us to sleep, whereas a bare half-hundred words breathed upon by some man in his agony, or in his exaltation, or in his idleness, ten generations ago, can still lead whole nations into and out of captivity, can open to us the doors of the three worlds, or stir us so intolerably that we can scarcely abide to look at our own souls. It is a miracle—one that happens very seldom. But secretly each one of the masterless men with the words has hope, or has had hope, that the miracle may be wrought again through him.

And why not? If a tinker in Bedford gaol; if a pamphleteering shopkeeper, pilloried in London; if a muzzy Scot; if a despised German Jew; or a condemned French thief, or an English Admiralty official with a taste for letters can be miraculously afflicted with the magic of the necessary word, why not any man at any time? Our world, which is only concerned in the perpetuation of the record, sanctions that hope just as kindly and just as cruelly as Nature sanctions love.

All it suggests is that the man with the Words shall wait upon the man of achievement, and step by step with him try to tell the story to the Tribe. All it demands is that the magic of every word shall be tried out to the uttermost by every means, fair or foul, that the mind of man can suggest. There is no room, and the world insists that there shall be no room, for pity, for mercy, for respect, for fear, or even for loyalty between man and his fellow-man, when the record of the Tribe comes to be written. That record must satisfy, at all costs to the word and to the man behind the word. It must satisfy alike the keenest vanity and the deepest self-knowledge of the present; it must satisfy also the most shameless curiosity of the future. When it has done this it is literature of which it will be said, in due time, that it fitly represents its age. I say in due time because ages, like individuals, do not always appreciate the merits of a record that purports to represent them. The trouble is that one always expects just a little more out of a thing than one puts into it. Whether it be an age or an individual, one is always a little pained and a little pessimistic to find that all one gets back is just one's bare deserts. This is a difficulty old as literature.

A little incident that came within my experience

a while ago shows that that difficulty is always being raised by the most unexpected people all about the world. It happened in a land where the magic of words is peculiarly potent and far-reaching, that there was a Tribe that wanted rain, and the rain-doctors set about getting it. To a certain extent the rain-doctors succeeded. But the rain their magic brought was not a full driving downpour that tells of large prosperity; it was patchy, local, circumscribed, and uncertain. There were unhealthy little squalls blowing about the country and doing damage. Whole districts were flooded out by waterspouts, and other districts annoyed by trickling showers, soon dried by the sun. And so the Tribe went to the rain-doctors, being very angry, and they said, "What is this rain that you make? You did not make rain like this in the time of our fathers. What have you been doing?" And the rain-doctors said, "We have been making our proper magic. Supposing you tell us what you have been doing lately?" And the Tribe said, "Oh, our head-men have been running about hunting jackals, and our little people have been running about chasing grasshoppers! What has that to do with your rain-making?" "It has everything to do with it," said the rain-doctors. "Just as long as your head-men run about hunting jackals, and just as long as your little people run about chasing grasshoppers, just so long will the rain fall in this manner."

II

THE CLAIMS OF ART

I sought beauty, but men would not see. May their eyes now fall sometimes upon my wife and babe.

THE CLAIMS OF ART

Artists' General Benevolent Institution: May 1907

SOME few years ago—in fact, before the Artists' General Benevolent Institution was founded—King Solomon, speaking of things in general, said that the race was not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Speaking of Art in particular, he said: "Nor yet favour to men of skill; but Time and Chance happeneth to them all." Solomon was a generous patron of the arts, and an original man of letters. Nobody has improved on his remark; and you may have noticed that nobody has improved the state of affairs that gave rise to it. There must be as many men nowadays as there were in Solomon's time whose skill has not found favour, and I should like to try and interest you in the fate of a few of them.

In an enlightened and democratic age like ours, it is possible to say that, if a man's skill has not found favour with the public, the blame must lie with the man, or with the skill. This is a pretty doctrine. I wish I could subscribe to it myself. There are, however, men who devote their skill to producing things and expressing ideas for which the public has no present need. Being artists, these men must needs do the work that is laid upon them to do, and while they are doing it they are apt to overlook a number of important worldly considerations. It is reprehensible, of course—and, worse than reprehensible, it is unbusinesslike—but it

happens; and it happens more frequently than people would imagine. The Callings are unlike the Professions. No one embraces the career of Art, any more than one enters Science or the Services, with the direct idea of making money. The material rewards of Art are oftenest so small that men may be forgiven if they sacrifice themselves and their belongings to make an appeal to the next generation, while they neglect their own. These, then, are the men who do not very greatly care whether their skill finds immediate favour or not. They have elected to take their chance with time to come; but the records of the Institution and the Orphan Fund will tell you that their descendants have to take certain or uncertain chances *now*.

Besides these, there are the others whose skill, however much they may desire it, has not found favour. Time has not given them their chance; their skill has not found favour; and by the world's verdict they have not achieved success.

The world's verdict is, of course, of great financial value. The verdict of our fellow-craftsmen is a little nearer the facts of the case. Thank goodness, we all count among our friends delightful men and women whose skill has not found favour, but to whose skill, sympathy, humour, and, above all, knowledge, we owe more than we realise. It may be that the very generosity of soul which impelled them to lavish themselves so unstintingly upon their associates has stood in the way of their more evident advancement, and that some of these good spirits are now facing—I won't say defeat: there is no abiding defeat in Art—but the outer appearance of defeat. If this be so, it is a comfortable thought that an organisation exists which, by our good will, can

help them as quietly and as unostentatiously as they helped us. For their lot is hard!

It is much pleasanter to contemplate the man whose skill has found favour and keeps it. One is almost hypnotised into the belief that here, at least, Time and Chance have been eliminated by the progress of modern civilisation. Unluckily, last year's report of the Institution shows that time and chance are as uncontrolled a brace of impressionists as ever they were—rather brutal in their methods, but deadly sure of their effects. The report for last year is, quite rightly, a discreetly veiled document. It is a twelvemonth's casualty-list among a very small proportion of those who set out to make life beautiful, and found it very bitter. You can see that it covers several of the calamities that can overtake a working man—want, disease, breakdown, madness, and death. Your imagination can fill in the background.

And, talking of imagination, do you know the Black Thought, Gentlemen? I am loth to remind you of it in this fenced and pleasant place, but it is the one emotion that all men of imagination have in common. It is a horror of great darkness that drops upon a man unbidden, and drives him to think lucidly, connectedly, with Cruikshank detail, of all the accidents whereby, through no fault of his own, he may be cut off from his work, and forced to leave those he loves defenceless to the world. You know the Black Thought, Gentlemen? It possesses some men in the dead of night; some in the sunshine; some when they are setting their palettes; some when they are stropping their razors; but only the very young, the very sound, and the very single, are exempt.

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If we look at this report again, we shall see that our blackest forebodings about our eyes, and our brain, and our hand, and our body, and our soul by which we live and work, have been realised last year in the case of these two hundred and two fellow-workers. *We* only heard the bullets of Time and Chance; these others have had to stop them with their bodies.

Gentlemen, I have to propose Prosperity to the Artists' General Benevolent Institution. Will you please respond to it?

III

VALUES IN LIFE

Fear many things, but never the good griefs of youth, terrible and bright as hail on the young corn that does not know it will recover at sun-rise.

VALUES IN LIFE

McGill University, Montreal: October 1907

PRINCIPAL PETERSON; most-learned fellow-Doctors; and You, discreet and well-conducted Students of our University: According to the ancient and laudable custom of the schools, I, as one of your wandering scholars returned, have been instructed to speak to you. The only penalty youth must pay for its enviable privilege is that of listening to people known, alas, to be older and alleged to be wiser. On such occasions youth feigns an air of polite interest and reverence, while age tries to look virtuous. Which pretenses sit uneasily upon both of them.

On such occasions very little truth is spoken. I will try not to depart from the convention. I will not tell you how the sins of youth are due very largely to its virtues; how its arrogance is most often the result of its innate shyness; how its brutality is the outcome of its natural virginity of spirit. These things are true, but your preceptors might object to such texts without the proper notes and emendations. But I can try to speak to you more or less truthfully on certain matters to which you may give the attention and belief proper to your years.

When, to use a detestable phrase, you go out into "the battle of life", you will be confronted by an organised conspiracy which will try to make you believe

that the world is governed by the idea of wealth for wealth's sake, and that all means which lead to the acquisition of that wealth are, if not laudable, at least expedient. Those of you who have fitly imbibed the spirit of our University—and it was not a materialistic University which trained a scholar to take both the Craven and the Ireland in England—will violently resent that thought; but you will live and eat and move and have your being in a world dominated by that thought. Some of you will probably succumb to the poison of it.

Now, I do not ask you not to be carried away by the first rush of the great game of life. That is expecting you to be more than human. But I *do* ask you, after the first heat of the game, that you draw breath and watch your fellows for a while. Sooner or later, you will see some man to whom the idea of wealth as mere wealth does not appeal, whom the methods of amassing that wealth do not interest, and who will not accept money if you offer it to him at a certain price.

At first you will be inclined to laugh at this man and to think that he is not "smart" in his ideas. I suggest that you watch him closely, for he will presently demonstrate to you that money dominates everybody except the man who does not want money. You may meet that man on your farm, in your village, or in your legislature. But be sure that, whenever or wherever you meet him, as soon as it comes to a direct issue between you, his little finger will be thicker than your loins. You will go in fear of him: he will not go in fear of you. You will do what he wants: he will not do what you want. You will find that you have no weapon in your armoury with which you can attack him; no argument

with which you can appeal to him. Whatever you gain, he will gain more.

I would like you to study that man. I would like you better to be that man, because from the lower point of view it doesn't pay to be obsessed by the desire of wealth for wealth's sake. If more wealth be necessary to you, for purposes not your own, use your left hand to acquire it, but keep your right for your proper work in life. If you employ both arms in that game you will be in danger of stooping; in danger, also, of losing your soul. But in spite of everything you may succeed, you may be successful, you may acquire enormous wealth. In which case I warn you that you stand in grave danger of being spoken and written of and pointed out as "a smart man". And that is one of the most terrible calamities that can overtake a sane, civilised, white man in our Empire to-day.

They say youth is the season of hope, ambition, and uplift—that the last word youth needs is an exhortation to be cheerful. Some of you here know—and I remember—that youth can be a season of great depression, despondencies, doubts, waverings, the worse because they seem to be peculiar to ourselves and incommunicable to our fellows. There is a certain darkness into which the soul of the young man sometimes descends—a horror of desolation, abandonment, and realised worthlessness, which is one of the most real of the hells in which we are compelled to walk.

I know of what I speak. This is due to a variety of causes, the chief of which is the egotism of the human animal itself. But I can tell you for your comfort that the best cure for it is to interest yourself, to lose yourself, in some issue not personal to yourself—in another

man's trouble, or, preferably, another man's joy. But if the dark hour does not vanish, as sometimes it doesn't; if the black cloud will not lift, as sometimes it will not; let me tell you again for your comfort that there are many liars in the world, but there are no liars like our own sensations. The despair and horror mean nothing, because there is for you nothing irremediable, nothing ineffaceable, nothing irrevocable in anything you may have said or thought or done. If, for any reason, you cannot believe or have not been taught to believe in the infinite mercy of Heaven which has made us all, and will take care we do not go far astray, at least believe that you are not yet sufficiently important to be taken too seriously by the Powers above us or beneath us. In other words, take anything and everything seriously except yourselves.

I regret that I noticed certain signs of irreverent laughter when I alluded to the word "smartness". I have no message to deliver, but if I had a message to deliver to a University which I love, to the young men who have the future of their country to mould, I would say with all the force at my command: Do not be "smart". If I were not a Doctor of this University with a deep interest in its discipline, and if I did not hold the strongest views on that reprehensible form of amusement known as "rushing", I would say that whenever and wherever you find one of your dear little playmates showing signs of "smartness" in his work, his talk, or his play, take him tenderly by the hand—by both hands, by the back of the neck if necessary—and lovingly, playfully but firmly, lead him to a knowledge of higher and more interesting things.

IV

IMPERIAL RELATIONS

When the young men jesting played at horses and drew the chariot down the street, Callimenes did not foresee that he should meet them again, self-fastened to heavier yokes.

IMPERIAL RELATIONS

Canadian Club, Toronto: October 1907

MR. PRESIDENT and Members of the Canadian Club: Is this quite fair? It seems to me very unjust, most wrong, that the thousands of men who have fought and toiled and died for our Empire have passed for the most part without human acknowledgement, while a man who has merely caught the popular ear by trying to describe some of their thoughts and ideas should receive such a welcome as this. Well, the reward is not to the man himself. You have done him a great, a very great honour, one which I make bold to hope is not so much to the author whose name I bear as to the ideas that I have been fortunate enough to reflect.

Now the idea of our Empire as a community of men of allied race and identical aims, united in comradeship, comprehension, and sympathy, is no new thing. It grew up in the hearts of all our people with their national growth as the peoples in the Empire grew to the stature of distinct nations. None can say where it was born, but we all know the one man who in our time gave present life to that grand conception. Our children will tell their sons of the statesman who in the evening of his days, crowned with years and honour, beheld what our Empire might be made, who stepped aside from the sheep-tracks of little politicians, who put from

him ease, comfort, friendship, and lost even health itself that he might inspire and lead a young generation to follow him along the new path. We ourselves are too near the man and his work to understand the full significance of Joseph Chamberlain. It is the high tradition of our land that in moments of need a man shall not be wanting to do and dare, and if need be to die, for his people. It is the custom of our land to accept that sacrifice as a matter of course—always without thanks, often with ungracious criticism

But the custom has not weakened the tradition, for in all walks of life in every quarter of the Empire you will find to-day men content—more than content, eager —to endure any hardship, any misunderstanding, for aims that are not even remotely theirs, for objects in which they have no specific interest except the honour and integrity and advancement of their village, their town, their State, their Province, or their country. Now the history of Canada, of all our young nations, as I read it, is the record of just that spirit, the story of just those men, the pioneers who rode out in advance of the community, and who broke the trails for their brothers' use. And we are so new even now that in every quarter of the Empire to-day you can see those pioneers, putting forth on their quests. Behind them lie the little towns, collections of shacks or tin-roofed houses, where they buy their trading outfit and their trading-goods; just such little towns as your superb Toronto once was. The men you know, the men who live in them, will tell you seriously that in a few years they will be second Torontos, second Johannesburgs, second Wellingtons, second Melbournes, as the case may be. And we laugh! Knowing how miracles have

been wrought on our own behalf, we cannot conceive that they will be wrought for anyone else.

But we do not laugh a few years later when one of those lonely pioneers rides up to us, the mayor of his city—no mean city—and well on his way to be a millionaire. We laugh still less when his city writes to our dearest rival and wishes to know how soon he can deliver a million and three-quarters city water-mains, with pipes and sewers, as per specification appended. Then we mourn. Then we grieve. Then we say to ourselves, if we had only known, had only guessed, that that dear little jumping-off place to nowhere was going to be what it is, we would have paid it some attention; we would have had more faith in it; and *now* we should be sharing the contract! But we have only to meet another man, and we go straight away and make the same mistake, laughing at this man on another pony, hailing from another collection of houses which will be another city. Is it possible that any of you as individuals have made that mistake?

Then the question is, are we not in time of peace a little too prone as nations to repeat that blunder in our relations to our fellow-nations throughout the Empire? Put it this way: Are we not each a little too occupied in our immediate present—in time of peace a little too occupied with our immediate present, to take an interest in the potentialities of our neighbours' future? I say in time of peace, because all the world remembers when one of our community was in distress Canada went to her aid, as Australia went, as New Zealand went, as the Crown colonies went, without one thought of present interests, or politics, or pocket.

And out of that great gathering of our men on the

plains of South Africa there was born, I think, a treaty of mutual preference between the various members of that Empire which—I am no diplomatist myself—I think regular diplomatists will find it difficult to annul.

It may be for reasons of her own that, for the time being, Canada will judge it expedient to make her court with older civilisations, to deal, for the time being, with nations of a more amazing present than that which belongs to Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. But I am sure, gentlemen, that if you as business men send out or investigate for yourselves you will find in those countries that I have named the promise of markets worthy of your serious attention. Were I a business man I could show you that as regards our mutual trade we are no more than children playing store on the thresholds of our real markets.

I can put my hand on the map and point to certain countries that I know, and I can show you how the natural resources of such and such areas must create vast and stable industries, rearing up a power on a larger scale than the world has yet witnessed. And the plant for all that power has to be imported from somewhere! I could prove to you how the junction of certain railways and the conditions of certain ports must result in huge commercial centres, clamorous for the luxuries of all the world; how the inevitable growth of population must make a sub-continent of pleasant and luxurious homes in all their varied nature.

I can show you the sites of a chain of cities in the future fed by thousands and thousands of mills. And the plant for the whole of *that* development has to be imported from somewhere! But I can show you, moreover, in those countries that I have named, the same

superb faith in the future, the same audacious handling of time, space, and material, the same humorous, fearless outlook on problems that would make older communities turn grey with hysterics; the same joyful acceptance of the apparently impossible, the same light-hearted victory over it, and, above all, the same deep delight in life and work that Canada has revealed to the world. And how could it be otherwise? The men of these lands have worked out their salvation under skies as bright and with hearts as large as yours.

They have developed and settled, they are developing and settling, vast areas with much the same machinery, moral and physical, as you use. They face the five great problems—I prefer to call them Points of Fellowship—Education, Immigration, Transportation, Irrigation, and Administration. They face them on the same lines as you do. Who, then, in the long run, can better or more understandingly supply their wants than you? Who in the long run can better or more understandingly supply your wants than they? Am I looking too far forward? I think not. A young country must take long views, the same as a young man must take long, very long, views. Our four young nations—the Big Four—have a long, an uphill, and a triumphant road to tread. Go you out, gentlemen, and make sure for yourselves that our roads lie together.

V

GROWTH AND RESPONSIBILITY

Heronax prays for that plains-commanding City which he knew in her youth, and now as a matron honoured between sons—that their children may not shame her children; for she, indeed, bore men strong to drive the cleansing steel across far fields.

GROWTH AND RESPONSIBILITY

Canadian Club, Winnipeg: October 1907

MR. PRESIDENT, gentlemen of the Canadian Club, fellow-subjects—I am only a dealer in words, and you can scarcely wonder that I cannot find any words—speaking from my heart—wherewith to thank you for the honour which you have done me. The thing to me—the experience to me—is most overwhelming. What Mr. Gordon has been good enough to say about such work as I have done, I can only hope that you will very kindly try to—believe. But if any one of you in his life has ever been called "good", he will perhaps recall the thoughts that went through his mind when he considered what he really was.

To one portion of the indictment I plead guilty. I *have*, I confess it now, done my best for about twenty years to make all the men of the sister nations within the Empire interested in each other. Because I know that at heart all our men are pretty much alike, in that they have the same problems, the same aspirations, and the same loves, and the same hates; and when all is said and done, we have only each other to depend upon. And if, through any good fortune, any work of mine has helped to make the men all over the world understand each other a little bit—I won't say, understand—to keep them more interested in each other, then great is my reward.

I seem to have caught in the speech of one gentleman a reference to snow. I assure you, gentlemen, I explained the moment I landed in Quebec, that all the lumber in this country was shifted on pneumatic tyres in July. I pointed out that snow was unheard of, and that what they mistook for it was French chalk. I have done everything I could.

Now I do not wish to revive your dark past, or rather our dark past, shall I say, but fifteen years ago, almost to the day, I was in Winnipeg. At that time the city was seriously considering wherewithal she should be paved. The street pavement question was very important and, as far as I could gather, from the inhabitants of the city—the men of that generation—it appeared that at that remote epoch snow used to fall within the city limits and, when it melted, the streets were what I have heard called "muddy". I left the city of Winnipeg discussing that problem, chiefly in buggies, that would not move, in Main Street, and I went away for fifteen years, which in the life of a nation is equivalent to about fifteen minutes in the life of a man. I come back, and I find the Winnipeg of to-day a metropolis. This morning I have been over, perhaps, more than sixteen or twenty-two miles of asphalt, looking at some small part of the principal portions of your most marvellous city. I have seen all the buildings that you have created for your convenience, for your trade, for your necessities, for your justifiable pride and luxury, and above all for the education of your children.

The visions that your old men saw fifteen years ago I saw translated to-day into stone and brick and concrete. The dreams that your young men dreamed I saw accepted as the ordinary facts of everyday life,

and they will, in turn, give place to vaster and more far-reaching imaginations. Gentlemen, this record of unsurpassed achievement, and my admiration for it, is as keen as my envy. I say my envy, because, as you know, I have spent some large portion of my life among men of my own blood and race in other lands less fortunate than this land—among men who are labouring with their brains and the sweat of their bodies to build up new cities, and to make firm the outworks of civilisation.

These things are not accomplished except by the hardest of toil, high courage, eternal sacrifice, and very often bitter disappointment. The mere buildings and streets of a town do not tell that story to the outsider; but no man who has been present, as I have been present, at the building up of a new city, or foundation of a new community—no man who has been at the birth-throes of a nation, can fail to hear that story cried aloud, as it were, by every block, store, or private residence that he passes. Therefore, my heart goes out to the city of your love and your pride, because I know what lies behind the mere houses in the streets that one sees. I know the passion and the sacrifice that went to the upbuilding of each, and that will continue to go to its existence, and to all that its existence implies.

But I find cause for a deeper appeal in other things than those which you were good enough to show me to-day. I have realised here the existence of an assured nationhood. The spirit of a people contented not to be another people or the imitators of any other people—contented to be themselves. This spirit, of course, existed fifteen years ago, but that spirit, as I remember—and I have not forgotten some of my walks and talks

in the city—then doubted a little. It found it necessary to explain. It stated its position, and, perhaps, it waited a little to see what other people thought of its position. Thank God I find no echo of that mood here to-day! I can feel by the men on the streets, and see by a thousand signs, that here is a people in their own land,whose heart-springs go down deep into the fabric, and who will be trustees for a nation.

This is worth more than anything else, for there is no unliftable curse on any people, except the idea of a weak or a degraded nationhood. Neither commerce nor art nor literature make up for the loss of that spirit. Without it the biggest city the world has ever seen is merely a shack of organised enterprise. With that national spirit the meanest collection of packing-cases that was ever tack-hammered together on a prairie can uplift and dominate a continent.

Gentlemen, you are fortunate beyond most other communities. Your own labour, your own sacrifice have given you material prosperity in overwhelming abundance; and the Gods above have not denied you the light that shows the true use and the true significance of that material prosperity.

One is forced back to the old words that you stand on the threshold of an unbelievable future. There is no man, and here I must quote again, "that can foresee or set limits to your destiny". But any man, gentlemen —even I—have the right to remind you, before I sit down, that to whom much has been given, from them much—much—shall be required!

VI

THE HANDICAPS OF LETTERS

Hades keeps not faith with us later singers, but releases the great ones full-tongued to overbear us when we would ply our art. Who can sing against Homer and Sappho, or the voices that have told all?

THE HANDICAPS OF LETTERS

Royal Literary Fund: May 1908

I AM greatly honoured by being allowed to propose the toast of "Prosperity to the Royal Literary Fund"—in other words, to appeal to you on behalf of certain men and women of letters who stand in need of your assistance. And since one speaks of the workmen, one must speak also a little of the craft to which they have given or are giving their lives. I shall be specially careful to guard against making extravagant claims for either. If you go no further back than the Book of Job you will find that letters, like the art of printing, were born perfect. Some professions, law and medicine, for example, are still in a state of evolution, inasmuch as no expert in them seems to be quite sure that he can win a case or cure a cold. On the other hand, the calling of letters carries with it the disabilities from which these professions are free. When an eminent lawyer or physician is once dead, he is always dead. His ghost does not continue to practise in the Law Courts or the operating theatre. Now it cannot have escaped your attention that a writer often does not begin to live till he has been dead for some time. In certain notorious cases the longer he has been dead the more alive he is, and the more acute is his competition against the living. I do not ask you to imagine the feelings of a barrister exposed to the competition of all the dead Lord Chancellors that ever sat on the woolsack, each delivering judge-

ments on any conceivable case at 6d. per judgement, paper-bound. I only ask you to allow that what lawyers call the "dead hand"—in this case with a pen in it—lies heavy on the calling of letters. In other callings of life there exists a convention that what a man has made shall be his own and his children's after him. With regard to letters, the world decides that, after a very short time, all that a writer may have created shall be taken from him and shall become the property of anybody and everybody except the original maker. This may be right. It may be more important that men should be helped to think than that they should be helped to live. But those on whom this righteousness is executed find it difficult to establish a family on letters. Sometimes they find it difficult to feed one. That letters should be exempted from the law of continuous ownership seems to constitute another handicap to the calling. Most men are bound by oath, or organisation, or natural instinct not to work for nothing. When his demon urges a man of letters to work, he may do so without any regard to wages or the sentiments of his fellow-workers. This may be incontinence or inspiration. Whichever it is, we must face the fact and its consequences, that at any moment a man of letters may choose to pay, not only with his skin, but in cash and credit for leave to do his work, to say the thing he desires to say. This is perhaps not fair to himself or his fellows, but it is a law of his being, and as such constitutes yet another handicap.

And there is a legend in Philistia—a pharisaical legend—that those who follow letters are disorderly-minded, unstable of habit, and thus peculiarly open to misfortune. Now, since the Pharisees originate very

little that has not been put into their minds by the Scribes, it is possible that men of letters, writing about men of letters, have themselves to thank in some measure for this unkind judgement. Every man in trouble naturally cries that there is no sorrow like his sorrow; but not all men, not all men's friends, nor all men's enemies, can draw the world's attention to that complaint. Writers have been their own interpreters in this respect—not always to their own advantage. It does not square with experience that any class of men has preeminence over any other class in the zeal and perseverance with which its members go about to compass their own ruin. Is it not more reasonable to hold that the triple handicap I have mentioned, and not so much individual folly, is responsible for the high percentage of casualties among men of letters? Men perpetually measured against the great works of the past; men debarred by law from full possession of their own works in the present; men driven from within to work whether their world desires that work or not—such men must always enjoy the privilege accorded to minorities. They must suffer. Much of this suffering is inevitable, but some of it the Fund, by your good help, can reach and alleviate as few other institutions can. It has had over a century's experience of all the chances and misfortunes that can overtake men and women. Its work is done, as we would desire it to be done in our own cases, in silence and discretion, and for that very reason it is difficult, as the report says, to bring home the value of the work to the public.

We cannot foretell in the multitude of words about us whose words are destined to survive, to rule, to delight, to persuade or accuse those that come after. We

hope that some will so survive. All we are sure of now is that among the many men and women who have followed letters in this high hope a certain number have been overborne by evil chances, accidents, and misfortunes, which but for the mere whim of time and fortune, might have come to any one of us.

I give you, then, that you may give, "Prosperity to the Royal Literary Fund".

VII

A DOCTOR'S WORK

I was Pausanias, Physician, reported to have died of natural disease, but (I tell you) harried to death by sick people always asking aid. In bodiless Hades, however, where (the) one medicine has already been given, I sleep the night through.

A DOCTOR'S WORK

Middlesex Hospital: October 1908

GENTLEMEN—It may not have escaped your professional observation that there are only two classes of mankind in the world—doctors and patients. I have had some delicacy in confessing that I have belonged to the patient class ever since a doctor told me that all patients were phenomenal liars where their own symptoms were concerned. If I dared to take advantage of this magnificent opportunity which now is before me I should like to talk to you all about my own symptoms. However, I have been ordered—on medical advice—not to talk about patients, but doctors. Speaking, then, as a patient, I should say that the average patient looks upon the average doctor very much as the non-combatant looks upon the troops fighting on his behalf. The more trained men there are between his body and the enemy the better.

I have had the good fortune this afternoon of meeting a number of trained men who, in due time, will be drafted into your permanently mobilised Army which is always in action, always under fire against death. Of course, it is a little unfortunate that Death, as the senior practitioner, is bound to win in the long run; but we non-combatants, we patients, console ourselves with the idea that it will be your business to make the best terms you can with Death on our behalf; to see how his attacks can be longest delayed or diverted,

and, when he insists on driving the attack home, to see that he does it according to the rules of civilised warfare. Every sane human being is agreed that this long-drawn fight for time that we call life is one of the most important things in the world. It follows, therefore, that you, who control and oversee this fight, and who will reinforce it, must be amongst the most important people in the world. Certainly the world will treat you on that basis. It has long ago decided that you have no working hours which anybody is bound to respect, and nothing except your extreme bodily illness will excuse you in its eyes from refusing to help a man who thinks he may need your help at any hour of the day or night. Nobody will care whether you are in your bed, or in your bath, or at the theatre. If any one of the children of men has a pain or a hurt in him you will be summoned; and, as you know, what little vitality you may have accumulated in your leisure will be dragged out of you again.

In all time of flood, fire, famine, plague, pestilence, battle, murder, and sudden death it will be required of you that you report for duty at once, and go on duty at once, and that you stay on duty until your strength fails you or your conscience relieves you; whichever may be the longer period. This is your position—these are some of your obligations—and I do not think that they will grow any lighter. Have you heard of any legislation to limit *your* output? Have you heard of any Bill for an eight hours' day for doctors? Do you know of any change in public opinion which will allow you not to attend a patient when you know that the man never means to pay you? Have you heard any outcry against those people who can really afford surgical

appliances, and yet cadge round the hospitals for free advice, a cork leg, or a glass eye? I am afraid you have not.

It seems to be required of you that you must save others. It is nowhere laid down that you need save yourselves. That is to say, you belong to the privileged classes. I am sorry you have met my demonstration with a certain amount of levity. May I remind you of some of your privileges? You and Kings are the only people whose explanation the Police will accept if you exceed the legal limit in your car. On presentation of your visiting-card you can pass through the most turbulent crowd unmolested and even with applause. If you fly a yellow flag over a centre of population you can turn it into a desert. If you choose to fly a Red Cross flag over a desert you can turn it into a centre of population towards which, as I have seen, men will crawl on hands and knees. You can forbid any ship to enter any port in the world. If you think it necessary to the success of any operation in which you are interested, you can stop a 20,000-ton liner with mails in mid-ocean till the operation is concluded. You can tie up the traffic of a port without notice given. You can order whole quarters of a city to be pulled down or burnt up; and you can trust to the armed co-operation of the nearest troops to see that your prescriptions are properly carried out.

To do us poor patients justice, we do not often dispute doctor's orders unless we are frightened or upset by a long continuance of epidemic diseases. In this case, if we are uncivilised, we say that you have poisoned the drinking-water for your own purposes, and we turn out and throw stones at you in the street. If we are civilised

we do something else: but civilised people can throw stones too. You have been, and always will be, exposed to the contempt of the gifted amateur—the gentleman who knows by intuition everything that it has taken you years to learn. You have been exposed—you will always be exposed—to the attacks of those persons who consider their own undisciplined emotions more important than the world's most bitter agonies—those people who would limit, and cripple, and hamper research because they fear research may be accompanied by a little pain and suffering. But you have heard this afternoon a little of the history of your profession. You will find that such people have been with you—or, rather, against you—from the very beginning, ever since, I should say, the earliest Egyptians erected images in honour of cats—and dogs—on the banks of the Nile. Yet your work goes on, and will go on.

You remain now, perhaps, the only class that cares to tell the world that we can get no more out of a machine than we put into it; that if the fathers have eaten forbidden fruit, the children's teeth are very liable to be affected. Your training shows you, daily and hourly, that things are what they are, and the consequences will be what they will be, and that we can deceive no one except ourselves, when we pretend otherwise. Better still, you can prove what you have learned. If a patient chooses to disregard your warnings, you have not to wait a generation to convince him. You know you will be called in in a few days or weeks, and you will find your careless friend with a pain in his inside or a sore place on his body, precisely as you warned him would be the case. Have you ever considered what a tremendous privilege that is? At a time when few things

are called by their right names—when it is against the Spirit of the Time even to hint that an act may entail consequences—you are going to join a profession in which you will be paid for telling a man the truth, and every departure you may make from the truth you will make as a concession to man's bodily weakness, and not to your own mental weakness.

Realising these things, I do not think I need stretch your patience by talking to you about the high ideals and lofty ethics of a profession which exacts from its followers the largest responsibility and the highest death-rate—for its practitioners—of any profession in the world. If you will let me, I will wish you in your future what all men desire—enough work to do, and strength enough to do the work.

VIII

THE SPIRIT OF THE NAVY

None could foretell what would be required of the men or the ships in that hour; but both were so tempered that, when their hour came, it was seen to be no more than one of their hours.

THE SPIRIT OF THE NAVY

At a Naval Club: October 1908

IT OCCURS to me that the reputation to which your Chairman alludes was achieved not by doing anything in particular, but by writing stories—telling tales if you like—about things which other men have done. They say in the Navy, I believe, that a man is often influenced throughout the whole of his career by the events of his first commission. The circumstances of my early training happened to throw me among disciplined men of action—men who belonged to one or other of the Indian Services—men who were therefore accustomed to act under orders, and to live under authority, as the good of their Service required.

My business being to write, I wrote about them and their lives. I did not realise, then, what I realised later, that the men who belong to the Services—disciplined men of action, living under authority—constitute a very small portion of our world, and do not attract much of its attention or its interest. I did not realise then that where men of all ranks work together for aims and objects which are not for their own personal advantage, there arises among them a spirit, a tradition, and an unwritten law, which it is not very easy for the world at large to understand, or to sympathise with.

For instance, I belonged then to a Service where the unwritten law was that if you gave a man twice as much

work to do in a day as he could do, he would do it; but if you only gave him as much as he could do, he wouldn't do half of it. This in itself made me sympathise with the tradition of other Services who have the same unwritten law, and with the spirit which underlies every service on land and sea—specially on the Sea.

But as you yourselves know well, Gentlemen, the spirit of the Navy is too old, too varied, and too subtle, to be adequately interpreted by any outsider, no matter how keen his interest, or how deep his affection. He may paint a more or less truthful picture of externals; he may utter faithfully all that has been given him to say, but the essential soul of the machine—the spirit that makes the Service—will, and must, always elude him. How can it well be otherwise? The life out of which this spirit is born has always been a life more lonely, more apart than any life there is. The forces that mould that life have been forces beyond man's control; the men who live that life do not, as a rule, discuss the risks that they face every day in the execution of their duty, any more than they talk of that immense and final risk which they are preparing themselves to face at the Day of Armageddon. Even if they did, the world would not believe—would not understand.

So the Navy has been as a rule both inarticulate and unfashionable. Till very recently—till just the other day in fact—when a fleet disappeared under the skyline, it went out into empty space—absolute isolation—with no means visible or invisible of communicating with the shore. It is of course different since Marconi came in, but the tradition of the Navy's aloofness and separation from the tax-payer world at large still remains.

It is not altogether a bad tradition, d'you think? The Navy represents the man at the wheel in our ship of state, and speaking as a tax-payer, the less the passengers, that is the tax-payers, talk to or about the man at the wheel, the better it will be for all aboard the ship.

Isn't it possible that the very thoroughness with which the Navy has protected the nation in the past may constitute a source of weakness both for the Navy and the Nation? We have been safe for so long, and during all these generations have been so free to follow our own devices, that we tax-payers as a body to-day are utterly ignorant of the facts and the forces on which England depends for her existence. But instead of leaving the Navy alone, as our ancestors did, some of us are now trying to think. And thinking is a highly dangerous performance for amateurs. Some of us are like the monkeys in Brazil. We have sat so long upon the branch that we honestly think we can saw it off and still sit where we were. Some of us think that the Navy does not much matter one way or the other; some of us honestly regard it as a brutal and bloodthirsty anachronism, which if it can't be openly abolished, ought to be secretly crippled as soon as possible. Such views are not shocking or surprising. After four generations of peace and party politics they are inevitable; but the passengers holding these views need not be encouraged to talk too much to the man at the wheel.

There remain now a few—comparatively very few —of us tax-payers who take an interest in the Navy; but here again our immense ignorance, our utter divorce from the actualities of the Navy or any other Service, handicaps us. Some of us honestly think that navies depend altogether on guns, armour, and machinery,

and if we have these better or worse than anyone else, we are mathematically better or worse than anyone else. The battle of Tsu-shima—in the Sea of Japan—has rather upset the calculations; but you know how they are worked out. Multiply the calibre of a ship's primary armament by the thickness of her average plating in millimetres; add the indicated horse-power of the forward bilge-pumps, and divide it by the temperature of the cordite magazines. Then reduce the result to decimals and point out that what the country needs is more *Incredibles* or *Insupportables*, or whatever the latest fancy pattern of war-canoe happens to be. Now, nobody wants to undervalue machinery, but surely, Gentlemen, guns and machinery and armour are only ironmongery after all. They may be the best ironmongery in the world, and we must have them, but if talking, and arguing, and recriminating, and taking sides about them is going to react unfavourably on the men who have to handle the guns and sleep behind the armour, and run the machinery, why then, the less talk we have on Service matters outside the Service, the better all round. Silence is what we want.

Isn't the morale of a Service a thousandfold more important than its material? Can't we scratch up a fleet of *Impossibles* or *Undockables* in a few years for a few millions; but hasn't it taken thirty generations to develop the spirit of the Navy? And is anything except that spirit going to save the nation in the dark days ahead of us?

I don't know what has happened since the days of Trafalgar to make us think otherwise. The Navy may bulk larger on paper—or in the papers—than it did in Nelson's time, but it is more separated from the life

of the nation than it was then—for the simple reason that it is more specialised and scientific. In peace it exists under conditions which it takes years of training to understand; in war it will be subjected to mental and physical strains three days of which would make the mere sea-fight of Trafalgar a pleasant change and rest. We have no data to guide us for the future, but in judging by our thousand-year-old past, we can believe, and thank God for it, that whatever man may do, or neglect to do, the spirit of the Navy, which is man-made, but which no body of men can kill, will rise to meet and overcome every burden and every disability that may be imposed upon it—from without or within.

IX

THE RITUAL OF GOVERNMENT

Paracatathecus, the Herald, bequeaths to his successor his white wand of office with which he was wont to marshal the clamorous litigants in the Court, and his roll of holy precedents for all words and actions; knowing that men are better busied about ceremonial than nakedly delivered to the fear of crowds.

THE RITUAL OF GOVERNMENT

Brighton: November 1910

I AM entrusted with a toast which you can easily see demands somewhat cautious handling; for I cannot hide from you that the Houses of Parliament are very largely political in their nature. This has not always been the case. When the Kingdom of Sussex was a sovereign independent State a few hundred years ago, the South Saxons regarded what we should call politics as much less important than piracy, navigation, trade, and sport. On the rare occasions when they interested themselves in politics, the Member for Lewes was as likely as not to record his vote against the hon. Member for Brightelmstone with an axe or a sword. This method, though conclusive, was found to be wasteful, owing to the expense of repeated bye-elections. The survivors of the debates compromised at last on the counting of heads on a division instead of breaking them. There is much to be said for either plan. If you break heads, you at least discover what is inside them; if you count them, you have to take what is inside them on trust. If you take them on trust you get this whole business of politics as we know it to-day.

But there were certain things which our ancestors dared not take on trust. Courage in war; wisdom in council; skill in administration, ability to sway men; wealth, and craft; were matters which they knew by bitter experience lay at the roots of their national exist-

ence. Therefore, when they found a man conspicuously endowed with one or other of these qualities they promoted him, regardless of his birth or antecedents, to the inner council of picked men which from time immemorial has stood next to the King in our Anglo-Saxon Constitution. In doing this our forefathers recognised several things which we, perhaps, overlook. Our fathers created the State. The State did not create our fathers. They knew that men would not work to the utmost for any ambition that is bound by the term of their own little lives, but some men will work for the permanence of their own houses, and for the honour of their sons who come after them. So they said: "Let the son of the picked man succeed to his father's place in the council when his father dies". They knew that the son of a picked man, if he is any good at all, is often very valuably equipped with the results of his father's experience and observations, which he has absorbed unconsciously, in his youth, precisely as the son of a Thames pilot picks up marks and soundings.

If such a man were no good, our ancestors knew he would disappear more quickly from the assembly of the picked men than he would from an ordinary crowd, where the standard of success and the penalties for failure were lower. If he were neither good nor bad, but average, he was, by virtue of his position, independent; and our ancestors may have noticed that they were more likely to get unbiased judgement on a question of public policy from an average independent man than from a very clever one who had something to gain or lose by his answer. Achievement which benefits the kingdom; heredity which gives responsibility and incen-

tive to renewed achievement; independence which inspires fearless advice—these things were vitally important when England was in the making: and surely we have in these things the beginning of the House of Lords. Generation after generation, that Assembly has been recruited from proven capacity in every walk of life to serve the needs of the day according to the standards of the day. The needs and the standards have changed, and to meet them the position of the House has changed too. One-quarter of the present peerage has been created within the last thirty years, since the old road to Rottingdean was shut. One-half of it has come into existence since the foundation-stone of Brighton Town Hall was laid by Mr. Kemp in 1830.

Yet, in essence, the House of Lords is what it was from the first—a body of democratic aristocrats, chosen after trial and observation out of an aristocratic democracy to guard the permanent life of the nation—that inner political life of the race which is very little affected by legislation. Now if aristocracy implies the wealth of inherited tradition, if heredity means the instinct of accumulated experience, then is the House of Commons, equally with the House of Lords, aristocratic and hereditary. Lest there should be any doubt in the matter, it has surrounded itself with an etiquette which would be extreme in a Spanish court; which exacts a deference which would be extravagant at the footstool of a Caesar. Yet it conserves to its members a toleration that would be noticeable in members of a club. There is nothing that a Member of Parliament may not do so long as he respects the written and unwritten laws of the House. This is an excellent tradition, for it is one thing to advocate the repudiation of the National

Debt or the abolition of the Navy at sympathetic street-corners; it is quite another thing to explain how you would achieve your ends before an audience of your equals, who may or may not back your sentiments, but who would certainly call you to order if you put on your hat or took it off at the wrong time. This insistence on ceremonial at first sight appears rather a bore, but, when you have to listen to speeches, boredom is an excellent touchstone of character. It is not the actual fighting that tries a man's nerves so much as the waiting and being ordered about between the engagements.

Then, again, our forefathers were compelled to struggle hand-to-hand against people or institutions that wished to have more power in the State than was good for anyone concerned. The result of these experiences left Englishmen somewhat disinclined to be governed by any class or body, even by their own representatives in Parliament. Up till now, the national idea has been rather to choose capable men and to permit them to govern on the tacit understanding that they were not to govern too much. I suspect, then, that the elaborate ritual and complicated procedure of the House of Commons has been designed by the sense of the House as a barrier against the joys of unbridled legislation. Specialists, like experts, are not unprejudiced. The shoemaker says that there is nothing like leather; the doctor believes that the knife is life; I myself have a bias in favour of the pen; and the legislator is always in favour of making laws for Law's sake. In spite of our precautions the statute-books of our country are full of laws regulating almost every fact and relation of the Englishman's life, from the clothes he shall wear to the wages

that he shall earn. Most of these laws are dead and inoperative, but the Englishman is still alive and waiting, but not anxiously, for more laws to be tried upon him. Our candid friends tell us that our reluctance to accept law-making as the finest of indoor sports is due to our apathy, our bourgeois nature, and our lack of imagination. Has not someone said or written that our race has been contented to slink through the centuries with no higher object than that of avoiding trouble?

If the charge be true, then "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth". We hold to-day one square mile in every four of the land of the globe, and through our representatives we are responsible for the protection of one person in five out of the entire population of this little planet. May we not be excused if, so far, we have avoided trouble within these limits? May we not be forgiven if we have not exercised our imagination on our fellow-subjects? May we not plead that in the course of our development we have abated the pretensions and cooled the imaginations of kings, churches, armies, mobs, and their leaders? We cannot foresee what the future may send against us, but remembering who and what our fathers were, and trusting our instincts, we may face that future, if not with a light heart, at least with a steady one.

X

THE VERDICT OF EQUALS

A. "Which of all rewards was dearest to Statius the Charioteer, and to Crantas the Shipmaster?" B. "Neither the wreath nor the statue; nor the welcome of the City, nor the profit on the bales; but the strict verdict of their equals who had, in their time, turned the pillars grazing the tilted axles, or held straight the prows buffeted by wandering winds."

CORETTE LIBRARY CARROLL COLLEGE

THE VERDICT OF EQUALS

Royal Geographical Society: May 1912
(Lord Curzon presiding)

AS I understand it and as recent events have, I believe, proved, the Royal Geographical Society is the supreme Court of ultimate appeal and final revision throughout the geographical world.

To you, Gentlemen, in the long run, come all the survivors of all the expeditions—the men who, like many of you here to-night, have borne the extremes of adventure and hardship, to report what they have done in man's secular battle against Space and Time. To your tribunal they submit the records of their toil From your hands that record receives its final stamp of worth.

I confess there is something, to me as terrible as it is touching, in the thought of the men even now scattered under the shadow of death, from the Poles to the deserts, the crown of whose labours, when, please God, they return, will be your judgement. I have had the honour of meeting many such men of many nationalities, explorers of sand-buried cities in Central Asian deserts, bold hunters of big game or of meridians across unexplored mountains. They have told me many tales. But in one tale they never varied. Each took it for granted all he had done availed little till it had been weighed and passed by you—to the end, if I may para-

phrase one of the old geographers—to the end that "these men which were the painful and personal travellers might reap that good opinion and just commendation which they had deserved".

So high stands your credit; so unquestioned is your authority after nearly a hundred years!

And when one thinks a little on the illustrious roll of the living and the dead who have returned from the ends of the earth to speak before your assemblies, one realises that you have preeminently the right to seek from your President all the qualities that mark a leader of men.

If courage, organisation, tenacity, and the habit of commanding achievement are needed in the wilderness where men make their names, they are at least as necessary at headquarters where the work and the names are enrolled. As everyone knows: "Work begins when the work is finished". And there is yet another saying out of the Bureaucratic East which I am sure His Excellency—I mean your President—knows well. It holds good where anything is being done: "If you give a man more than he can do he will do it. If you only give him what he *can* do he'll do nothing".

It does not lie in my mouth to speak of the continuous, unnoticed, but vitally important work on which an organisation such as yours must be based. In common with thousands of others I have freely availed myself of the information which your Society always stands ready to offer or point the way to. For that reason I am specially glad to know that you are now on the road to house yourselves in a manner more befitting your merits. If the building matched the work, there should arise not only the headquarters of a great Society, but

a vast and ample hall—not of lost footsteps, but a Valhalla, as it were, of all the "personal and painful travellers" whose sacrifices have won us the use of the world; a sumptuously equipped Lodge of Instruction where men could find to their hand or see spread out before their eyes the whole history of travel which, after all, is the history of civilisation—where they could consult the sum of recorded science so far as it touches travel.

Maybe this is a dream. We are a race more given to employing the spirit of man in great works than to building temples in his honour. But I believe it will not be all, not always a dream. And when it comes true,the realisation will be due to your President.

It has been his fortune in the past to administer revenues of some size in the interests of a considerable society. If his present work concerns itself with smaller sums and the interests of a body which does not number one-fifth of the world's inhabitants, the power and personality that spent themselves ungrudgingly on the one, have not been and will not be withheld from the other.

For it is no small part of England's glory, as it is her strength, that those who serve her do so without limit or reservation equally in all things. So it is natural to us; it is accepted as part of the order of our nature; that your President should bring to your use and devote to your service energies and experience proven in schools that are neither cramped nor unworthy. I need not speak of that side of his life. It will endure.

Of the man himself it can fairly be said what the pious Richard Hakluyt, who was surely in spirit your first Presi-

dent, wrote of himself: "Howbeit, the honour and benefit of this commonwealth wherein I live and breathe hath made all difficulties seem light, all pains and industry pleasant, and all expenses of light value and moment unto me".

XI

THE USES OF READING

A. "When I heard thy words, my Father, I almost fell asleep through weariness." B. "Had I foreseen that sleep, my Son, I would have put aside all else to have pleased thee alone."

THE USES OF READING

To the late Mr. Pearson's House at Wellington College: May 1912

YOU have done me the honour of asking me to read a paper to your society this evening. Before I begin, I may as well confess that this is the first time I have ever read a paper in school since I was a member of the Natural History Society at my old school, when, for reasons which I need not explain to you, I had to read a paper whether I liked it or not.

It is one thing to write and quite another thing to read. And that brings me directly to what I wanted to speak about—which is the use and value of a little reading.

There is, or there was, an idea that reading in itself is a virtuous and holy deed. I can't quite agree with this, because it seems to me that the mere fact of a man's being fond of reading proves nothing one way or the other. He may be constitutionally lazy; or he may be overstrained, and so take refuge in a book to rest himself. He may be full of curiosity and wonder about the life on which he is just entering; and for that reason may plunge into any and every book he can lay hands on, in order to get information about things that are puzzling him, or frightening him, or interesting him.

Now, I am a very long way from saying that litera-

ture ought to be a chief or a leading interest in most men's lives, or even in the life of a nation. But a man who goes into life with no knowledge of the literature of his own country and without a certain acquaintance with the classics and the value of words, is as heavily handicapped as a man who takes up sports or games without knowing what has been done in these particular sports or games, before he came on the scene. He doesn't know the records and so he can't have any standards. I have a book at home that gives a summary with diagrams, of practically every attempt at perpetual-motion machines that have ever been invented for the last two hundred years. It was compiled for the purpose of saving inventors trouble; and the compiler says in his preface: "One of the grossest fallacies of the mind is that of taking for granted that ideas of mechanical construction, apparently the result of accident, must of necessity be quite original. The most doubtful originality is that which the inventor attributes to his ignorance of all previous plans coupled with his isolated position in life."

There you have precisely the position of the man who has no knowledge of literature—ignorant, that is, of all previous plans. Such a man is more likely than not to waste his own time and the patience of his friends—perhaps even to endanger the safety of the community—by inventing schemes for the conduct of his own, or his neighbours' affairs, which have been tried, found wanting, and laid aside any time these thousand years; and the record of which—the diagram and specification, so to say, of which—he could turn to if he had only taken the trouble to read.

One of the hardest things to realise, specially for a

young man, is that our forefathers were living men who really knew something, I would go further and say they knew a very great deal. Indeed, I should not be surprised if they knew quite as much as we do about the things that really concern men. What each generation forgets is that while the words which it uses to describe ideas are always changing, the ideas themselves do not change so quickly, nor are those ideas in any sense new. If we pay no attention to words whatever, we may become like the isolated gentleman who invents a new perpetual-motion machine on old lines in ignorance of all previous plans, and then is surprised that it doesn't work. If we confine our attention entirely to the slang of the day—that is to say, if we devote ourselves exclusively to modern literature—we get to think the world is progressing when it is only repeating itself. In both cases we are likely to be deceived, and what is more important, to deceive others. Therefore, it is advisable for us in our own interests, quite apart from considerations of personal amusement, to concern ourselves occasionally with a certain amount of our national literature drawn from all ages. I say from all ages, because it is only when one reads what men wrote long ago that one realises how absolutely modern the best of the old things are.

About fifteen hundred years ago some early Anglo-Saxon writer saw, or heard about (I imagine in those days men had generally seen what they wrote about) the ruins of an old Roman city half buried and going to pieces in the jungle somewhere in the south of England; with its walls split and falling; its roofs stripped of its tiles; its towers fallen, and all its luxurious baths and heating arrangements open to the air. The man be-

gins to wonder about the people who built all this magnificence and he says:

> Earth's grasp holdeth
> The mighty workmen
> Worn away, lorn away [geworen forloren]
> In the grip of the grave.

Then he thinks of the strong man who commanded the place when it was first built—most likely it was a Roman prefect—and he describes him:

> Gorgeous and gold-bright,
> Gaudily jewelled,
> Haughty and wine-hot,
> Shining in armour.

And as the poem goes on, we can almost see the band of Anglo-Saxon hunters or raiders, who have scrambled through the bushes, and stand, picking the thorns out of their legs, in the presence of this great, mysterious dead city. There is one touch which is exactly what hot and dirty men *would* think, when they saw all the paraphernalia of the old Roman baths:

> There stood courts of stone.
> The steam hotly rushed,
> With a wide eddy,
> Between shut walls.
> There were the baths
> Hot to bathe in.
> That was a boon indeed!

The whole thing is as modern as to-day's evening paper—but with a freshness and a directness and a simplicity that isn't common in modern work.

I'll take another instance. About five hundred years ago, Chaucer wrote a poem on how a man ought to

manage his life. The last verse of it—it is only three verses long—runs:

That thee is sent receive in buxomnesse [be thankful for what you get]
The wrestling of this world asketh a fall.
Here is no home—here is but wildernesse:
Forth pilgrime—forth beast from out thy stall!
Look up on high and thanke the God of all.
Weive thy lusts and let thy ghost thee lead [That means, keep yourself in hand and trust your spirit]
And truth shall thee deliver, it is no drede.

The whole thing absolutely covers the few facts in life that really matter.

A last instance. In the course of his wonderful career, Sir Walter Raleigh had occasion to write his opinion, as you may have to some day, on the value of forts for coast and harbour defence. Well, his practical experience showed him, what we forgot and only realised a few years ago, that mere forts on the land aren't enough to maintain an effective defence or blockade, unless they are supported by ships. And he says so. But he doesn't say it as you and I would. For some inscrutable reason Elizabethans, apparently, could not put pen to paper without producing uncommonly good prose. So he gives his reasons and his experiences thus: "In this age a valiant and judicious man-of-war will not fear to pass by the best appointed fort of Europe, with the help of a good tide and a leading gale of wind; no, though forty pieces of great artillery open their mouths against him, and threaten to tear him in pieces. It was not long since, that the Duke of Parma, besieging Antwerp and finding no possibility to master it otherwise than by famine, laid his cannon on the bank of the river so well

to purpose that he thought it impossible for the least boat to pass. Yet the Hollanders and Zeelanders, not blown up by any wind of glory, but coming to find a good market for their butter and cheese—even the poor men attending their profit, when all things were extreme dear at Antwerp—passed in boats of ten or twelve tun, by the mouth of the duke's cannon in despight of them, when a strong westerly wind and flood favoured them. As also with a contrary wind and ebbing tide they returned back again. So he was forced in the end to build his stockade overthwart the river, to his marvellous trouble and charge. It is true, that where a fort is so set that there is no passing along beside it, or that ships are driven to turn upon a bow-line towards it, wanting all help of wind and tide; there, and in such places, it is of great use and fearful. Otherwise not."

Here I have given you three specimens of not exactly modern literature in three different keys; the first dealing with a concrete thing seen and brought home to a man's mind; the second describing a man's thoughts on the conduct of his own soul; and the third a practical man's plans for dealing with an actual situation—a piece, that is, of pure intellect.

But it is very possible that when you come to read them, these three specimens may not appeal to you. No matter. That is just a question of temperament; and a man is no more to be blamed for not caring for certain forms of literature than he is for not thriving on certain forms of food.

But your choice is practically illimitable; for the literature of our England is strewn from end to end with a prodigality that almost frightens one—strewn with gems and jewels and glories and beauties fitted to every

conceivable need that can arise in the course of any human being's life. But we make very little use of them. That again is quite natural. If we could buy knowledge, prudence, forethought and all the elementary virtues out of sevenpenny editions of standard authors, we should long ago have become a race of unbearably perfect archangels. And we are still quite a little lower than the angels. None the less, it is possible that our reading, if so be we read wisely, may save us to a certain extent from some of the serious forms of trouble; or if we get into trouble, as we most certainly shall, may teach us how to come out of it decently.

Here is an instance, which has nothing to do directly with written words, that shows the extraordinary value of getting at another man's experience and using it. I was talking some time ago with our greatest General and he told me that when he went out first to India as a subaltern of Artillery, about seventeen years old, he was posted to his father's Command in Peshawur. A short time before that, his father had commanded a brigade in one of the big Frontier wars, which war, to put it gently, hadn't been a success. The general in charge of those operations had occupied a town and had put his guns in one place, his forage and his provisions in another, and had tried to hold more ground than he could with the troops at his disposal. Then the country rose round him and there was a series of regrettable incidents. (That was a campaign which, I have always thought, helped to bring on the Indian Mutiny.) Well, you can imagine how the young subaltern, sitting at the bottom of his father's table at Peshawur, must have heard the failure of the campaign discussed from every possible point of view by his father's comrades who

had taken part in it—majors and colonels of the old hooka-smoking times of the early '50's. And you can think of 'em throwing him a word here and there in the middle of their talk and saying: "Look here, youngster, if you're ever caught in such and such a position, you do so-and-so".

Then, years later, this young subaltern of Artillery became a general commanding an army and, by the luck of war, he found himself on the identical ground and in the identical city under practically the same conditions that he had heard discussed in his youth, by the men who had taken part in the old war. He said, telling me the tale: "It all came back to me. I put my guns and my forage and my rations where I could lay my hands on 'em; and I took very good care not to try and hold more ground than I had troops for; and I settled in quite comfortably. I sent a wire to the Indian Government telling them exactly how long I could hold out for—and—that was all there was to it." Of course there was a lot more to it—there was his own genius—but you can see the tremendous advantage he had in having got his knowledge in his youth. True, it was hereditary knowledge—more sound, more adhesive than anything he was likely to have got out of a book.

But the main idea is in line with what I've been talking about.

If a man brings a good mind to what he reads he may become, as it were, the spiritual descendant to some extent of great men, and this link, this spiritual hereditary tie, may help to just kick the beam in the right direction at a vital crisis; or may keep him from drifting through the long slack times when, so to speak, we are only fielding and no balls are coming our way.

You know those curious half-waking dreams that one dreams, about one's future—a sort of story without words of the things we mean to do later on? They shade off into a vision of a gloriously successful career in our chosen line with all the world at our feet, recognising at last what splendid fellows we were. Then we forgive all our enemies, after we've got our feet on their necks; take our seat either as a Viceroy or a legislator or a Field-Marshal or some insignificant trifle of that kind—and then we wake! Sometimes the dreams have a knack of coming true. A man does achieve something out of the ordinary; finds himself saddled with tremendous responsibilities and expected to play up to a new part. Well, that is the time that he should have provided himself with all the knowledge and strength that can be drawn from noble books, so that whatever has happened to him may not be overwhelming nor unexpected. And to do that, to keep his soul fit for all chances, a man should associate at certain times in his soul (there is no need to tell everyone about it) with the best, the most balanced, the largest, finest, and most honourable and capable minds of the past. It may be a snobbish way of putting it, but a man should know "the right people" in the great world of books, and they'll help to show him what the world really means. Men will tell you that the days are over when one can suddenly be called to power and glory. Don't you believe it! A chance may open suddenly in front of one at a minute's notice. A man's superior may die and leave him in temporary charge of a district half the size of France with ten million people in it. A flood, a storm, an outbreak of sickness may change a man's position and outlook and responsibility between breakfast and

lunch. One never knows one's luck, but one ought always to be ready for it. I have seen men very little over twenty get one chance and take it. To give you an instance, I happened to be in Bloemfontein after a "regrettable incident" called Sanna's Post—where we lost five or six hundred men and several guns in a little ambush. I met one of the survivors a few hours after the thing had happened. He had done very well in a losing game, and he had come out of it, looking exactly like a man after the last half of a really hectic footer game. His clothes were ripped to bits, but his temper was quite good. After he'd told his tale I said to him: "What are we going to do about it?" He said: "Oh, I don't know. 'Thank Heaven we have within the land five hundred as good as they.'"

Then he went off to report himself, and see if he could get on to the column that was going out in support. But not half an hour before I met him, I'd seen an agitated gentleman flogging a horse along the veldt and he had told me that the "flower of the British Army had been destroyed". Here were two men, under severe strain and excitement. One of them threw up a steadying quotation from the ancient, but quite modern, ballad of "Chevy Chase" and went on with his job. The other made bad worse by shouting what was nothing better than a newspaper scare head-line; and, judging by the rate he was travelling, I don't think he reported for duty that night.

And that brings me to what I fear you will find more than usually dull.

I have spoken already of the advisability of a man knowing something about the classics. I have no Greek. Mine stopped at a little Greek Testament on Monday

morning by gaslight before breakfast, and I depend for the rest of my knowledge on Bohn's cribs. But I got the ordinary allowance of Latin, ending with Virgil and Horace—specially Horace. I don't pretend that I liked it, any more than I should have liked anything else that purported to be education, but looking back at it now, it strikes me as valuable. I believe in the importance of a man getting some classics ground into him in his youth even though, as far as his elders can see (but I don't think one's elders are quite the judges) there is no visible result. Men tell us that what we want nowadays is a modern and scientific education—something that will be of immediate use to a man in "the battle of life". They say that you could teach a child of twelve in a couple of terms as much Latin as the average public schoolboy carries away at the end of seven years; and the rest of the time could be devoted to studying modern languages and science and the things that are of immediate use to him. I haven't the least doubt you could. Any child of twelve could kodak any masterpiece of Greek sculpture in less time than the cleverest artist in the world could begin to get ready to draw it. Any bright-minded intelligent pride of a prep.-school could in two terms learn the twenty or thirty odds and ends of quotations, the half-remembered Latin tags, which represent what the bulk of us carry away from our schools. I know a man who did much better than this. He was a wonderful Greek scholar and at school and at college he took every scholarship and gold medal that was in sight, and before he was twenty-five he was appointed lecturer to his own College. Then he called on one of the dons who was a bit of a philosopher as well as a scholar. The old man asked him a few polite ques-

tions. Then he said: "You know Plato of course". My friend in a modest way said he thought he did. He had an idea at the back of his head that he knew Plato rather better than most men of his time. "Well," said the old man, "what's it all about?"

My friend scratched his head a little. Then it slowly dawned on him that he literally and absolutely did not know what Plato was all about. He knew pretty much everything else connected with the gentleman, but to put it roughly, what Plato was after, what Plato's game was in the world, my friend did *not* know. Then he sat down and began to think what Plato was all about. He's still thinking.

I have a notion that our intelligent child of twelve would be rather like my college friend without my friend's willingness to go back and think. He would know his quotations probably more accurately than we do for a while; but I doubt if he would know what they were about. They would not be part of his system, incorporated into him in seven years. They would not come back to him unconsciously, and most certainly their spirit would not.

I attach a certain amount of importance to the spirit of a few old Latin tags and quotations. Some of them, not more than three lines long, give one the very essence of what a man ought to try to do. Others, equally short, let you understand once and for all, the things that a man should not do—under any circumstances. There are others—bits of odes from Horace, they happen to be in my case—that make one realise in later life as no other words in any other tongue can, the brotherhood of mankind in time of sorrow or affliction. But men say that one can get the same stuff in an easier

way and in a living tongue. They say there is no sense in dragging men up and down through grammar and construe for years and years, when at the last, all they can produce ("produce" is a good word) is a translation that would make Virgil, Horace or Cicero turn in their graves. Here is my defence of this alleged wicked waste of time. The reason why one has to parse and construe and grind at the dead tongues in which certain ideas are expressed, is *not* for the sake of what is called intellectual training—that may be given in other ways—but because only in that tongue is that idea expressed with absolute perfection. If it were not so the Odes of Horace would not have survived. (People aren't in a conspiracy to keep things alive.) I grant you that the kind of translations one serves up at school are as bad and as bald as they can be. They are bound to be so, because one cannot re-express an idea that has been perfectly set forth. (Men tried to do this, by the way, in the revised version of the Bible. They failed.) Yet, by a painful and laborious acquaintance with the mechanism of that particular tongue; by being made to take it to pieces and put it together again, and by that means only; we can arrive at a state of mind in which, though we cannot re-express the idea in any adequate words, we can realise and feel and absorb the idea. To put it in this way. No one can play cricket like Ranji at his best. But to appreciate Ranji's play; to pick up enough from it to try and improve your own with; you *must* have played cricket for more than two terms.

Our ancestors were not fools. They knew what we, I think, are in danger of forgetting—that the whole background of life, in law, civil administration, conduct of life, the terms of justice, the terms of science, the

value of government, are the everlasting ramparts of Rome and Greece—the father and mother of civilisation. And for that reason, before they turned a man into life at large, they arranged that he should not merely pick up, but absorb into his system (through his hide if necessary) the fact that Greece and Rome were there. Later on, they knew, he would find out for himself how much and how important they were and they are, and that they still exist.

Some time ago I had the honour to meet a statesman who had been in charge of a great portion of the Empire. He was an old man, trained in the old school, and, talking about this very subject, he said something like this: "All I took away from school and college was the fact that there were once peoples who didn't talk our tongue and who were very strong on sacrifice and ritual, particularly at meals, whose gods were different from ours and who had strict views on the disposal of the dead. Well, you know, all that is worth knowing if you ever have to govern India."

I have never had to govern India, but I quite agree with him.

A certain knowledge of the classics is worth having, because it makes you realise that all the world is not like ourselves in all respects, and yet in matters that really touch the inside life of a man, neither the standards nor the game have changed.

I suppose I ought to apologise for the attitude I've taken. I certainly *do* apologise for taking so long to explain it. We will now revisit calmer scenes. Let me assure you for your comfort that Literature can't be taught, unless a man really wants to know something about it. Pieces or periods can be set and studied with

notes, but that, thank goodness, is the worst that can happen.

One can't prescribe books, even the best books, to people unless one knows a good deal about each individual person. If a man is keen on reading, I think he ought to open his mind to some older man who knows him and his life, and to take his advice in the matter, and above all, to discuss with him the first books that interest him.

This idea applies only to what are called the standard authors—and—this is only my own theory. I don't know how it would work with you—the Elizabethan dramatists. You mustn't be afraid of fashions. The thing to remember is that all first-class stuff is as good and as new and as fresh now as in the day it was made.

But there are some things a man can't discuss with anyone, and it isn't right that he should. We have times and moods and tenses of black depression and despair and general mental discomfort which, for convenience sake, we call liver or sulks. But so far as my experience goes, that is just the time when a man is peculiarly accessible to the influence of a book, as he is to any other outside influence; and, moreover, that is just the time when he naturally and instinctively does not want anything of a mind-taxing soul-stirring nature. Then is the time to fall back on the books that neither pretend to be nor are accepted as masterpieces, but books whose tone and temper soothe your trouble for the time being. A man who knows you and your life may be able to recommend such books. Ask him.

The thing to be careful of when you are in this mood is to come out of it as soon as it lifts, and not to continue

dreaming over books because they suit that mood or because they minister to your own vanity. There have been a few great dreamers in the world who have achieved great things for the world; but for every dreamer whose dreams have been good, or at least not harmful, there are thousands who have been a hindrance to themselves, an expense to their families and a nuisance to mankind. Books used intemperately to excess become most dangerous drugs, and there is a type of book—modern I regret to say, as Mr. Pecksniff did *not* say about the Sirens—which is to be avoided when one's mind is a little off colour. One reads in a newspaper occasionally of the bold youth of ten who goes off with a knife and seven-pence halfpenny in coppers, to become a demon chauffeur or to lariat Red-Indians or shoot cowboys, and is then brought into court, weeping, by a policeman. And the magistrate says it's the sad result of reading—*Deadwood Dick* or *The Terror of Bloody Gulch.* It's hard to realise that there is a mass of modern stuff which is practically no more than *Deadwood Dick* and the penny dreadful disguised and flavoured to modern taste. They fill the mind, they are meant to fill the mind, with a lot of vague and windy ideas that one can start off to do miracles or benefit one's fellow-men (which is the fashion just now), without training or equipment of any kind except a desire to astonish the world and show one's independence—exactly like the kid with the penknife and the stolen coppers. It is not probable that you'll come much in the way of these books, but if you do, before you read them, watch the men who discuss 'em and recommend 'em to you. If they strike you as the kind of men you'd like to be with in a tight place, or to go to if you were

in trouble, then read them. Otherwise, as Sir Walter Raleigh said—"Otherwise not".

Most of you are going to enter what is called the life of action, in which you will discover that you will have to think harder, closer, and quicker than the bulk of men who take up what is so kindly called "the intellectual life". Harder, because you will be thinking against men, not books; closer, because your thoughts will be translated, several times a day perhaps, into action that may affect the lives and interests of men; quicker, because, even if you don't eventually make ghastly mistakes, you may have to alter your plans at a minute's notice to meet a changed situation. Incidentally, you will have to express your thoughts, wants, and orders both in speech and writing with much more clearness than the average literary man, and under circumstances that will not exactly lend themselves to clear thinking or easy writing. It is almost worse for a C.O. not to have expressive written (not spoken) words at his command than not to have men. With luck you can always scratch a few men together out of the hospitals or the Army Service Corps; but if you send in a report that nobody can make head or tail of, because you haven't the words to tell your case, you can lose a thousand men in half an hour. So you *must* get your words, and a working knowledge of the use of words. And words come out of literature—even if you make no other use of it.

Those of you who go into the Service will find out that, in spite of aeroplanes, you will have to guess, most of your time, at what is going on behind the next hill; and this is not only the whole business of war but of life. And those who have read the *Green Curve*,

which is a splendid book, know that you will have to think what is in the mind of the man who is opposed to you. And you must do that in life as well as in the Service.

Well, half of Literature is placing fields that aren't there, and the rest of it is recording how every conceivable kind of ball that can be bowled by the Fates or life or circumstances has, at one time or another, been bowled at some wretched or happy man; and how he has played it. Life is too short to hunt up the individual record in each case; but, over and above all the help we can get from our ordinary training, association with our betters, and our very limited experience, we can pick up from Literature a few general and fundamental ideas as to how the great game of life has been played by the best players.

XII

SOME ASPECTS OF TRAVEL

"The life of wanderers is ill to live?" "Credit it not. I have entered and possessed new lands daily for many days. Whether their earth or their water now possesses my carcass, they are welcome to it."

SOME ASPECTS OF TRAVEL

Royal Geographical Society: February 17, 1914

I MUST begin by asking your forgiveness where I touch on matters of which you know much more than I.

I cannot claim to have travelled widely, but I have met many travellers, and I have noticed what they tell the public in print of their experiences is one thing, and what they tell their friends by word of mouth is another. So I would like to try to deal with some of the more intimate and personal aspects of travel. They may be trivial or absurd, but one must remember that in a few years, most of our existing methods of transport, together with the physical and mental emotions that accompany them, will be profoundly changed. The time is near when men will receive their normal impressions of a new country suddenly and in plan, not slowly and in perspective; when the most extreme distances will be brought within the compass of one week's—one hundred and sixty-eight hours'—travel; when the word "inaccessible" as applied to any given spot on the surface of the globe will cease to have any meaning. I present myself to-night, then, as in some sort a recorder of experiences which are on the eve of being superseded.

Many years ago a friend of mine was engaged on a survey in a little-known part of Asia. When he came back, I asked him what he used to think about while he was at work. He told me that, as soon as his party had

settled to camp-routine, his mind moved in an uneasy triangle—he traced it in the air as he spoke—between Supplies, possible Sickness, and Mileage. The figure was as real to him as one on a blackboard. It was an isosceles triangle with a narrow base, in the centre of which he felt himself to be walking, between Supplies on the one hand and Sickness on the other, always looking forward to the always retreating point M. When his work was ended, and the survey connected up, the point M, he said, "opened and let him through". Till then he had felt himself constricted—harnessed up was his word—between these imaginary lines. I remember we discussed the matter at some length, and in our interest to discover why his thoughts had cast themselves into a triangle, we missed, I think, the main point—that the phenomenon did not show itself till the boy had been worked rather hard.

That roused my interest in what one might call the psychology of moving bodies under strain. Most of the men I was brought in contact with, knew something about the strain of travel, and I asked them—as I have asked many men since—how they realised their experiences to themselves. Few things are more doubtful than any man's, especially any Englishman's, evidence as to his own feelings; and in the rare cases where one meets a man who can or cares to testify, one finds that a very few days of baths, clean clothes, and mixed society blur the clearness of his record. Travellers, like sea-trout, should be caught fresh-run, with their experiences still sticking to them.

Yet it seemed to me, from what I was told, that a number of the men who work under strain and responsibility, as leaders of expeditions—survey, prospecting,

exploration, or scientific—come to evolve a more or less definite image of their work within the limits of which, or with reference to which, they accomplish that work. For the sake of brevity, let us call those images pressure-lines.

I have no knowledge of any other case except the one I have given, of pressure-lines taking the form of a complete mathematical figure. One man who had led a rather trying expedition, told me that his pressure-line showed itself, after a few days' hard marching, as a diagonally shaded bar or line a little above and a little to the right of his right eyebrow. It was a distinct mental image almost as insistent as a scratch on the glass of one's spectacles; and he felt himself to be constantly pushing in or shouldering towards it. After a good day's work the bar was clear and firm in outline. A bad day, with lost loads and delayed transport, broke it up into ragged curdled flecks. He carried the bar with him for the first few mornings after his return to civilisation, exactly as one carried the memory of the school-bell for the first few mornings of one's holidays.

Many of the pressure-lines, of course, cannot be defined in words. One man has written to me: "I had the picture of my job at the back of my head all the time. For the life of me I couldn't tell you what it was like, but it was there and it was quite real. I kept it by me, or rather it kept by me, till I had had a week's sleep between sheets." And another man told me that his pressure-line appeared to him as an amorphous lump—a cross between a monthly calendar and a porter's load. That gives an idea of complicated pressure and its attendant horrors. And yet another, who suf-

fered from malaria, compared his pressure-line to that indescribable sensation of swelling and thickening of the hands at the beginning of a bout of fever, which, as you know, is sometimes accompanied by a consciousness of indefinitely protracted parallel ruled lines in the head.

In every case, I noted that the pressure-lines did not show themselves till the man was physically tired out—and a little more. When the pressure of the work was removed and the man was fed again, the lines gradually faded, and could only be recalled by an effort of will.

And I remember, too, when I was a young man, listening to Stanley, who was talking, half to himself, of some work he had done in his early days. He had been under the necessity of covering a certain distance in a certain time, and he ended his monologue with an abrupt fore-reaching movement of his first finger, as though he were pegging down or hooking up something, and he said: "Of course, it was the mileage that worried me!" I often wondered whether that gesture of Stanley's was characteristic, and what form *his* pressure-lines took.

Several men have told me that their mental idea of their day's work, as distinguished from the responsibility of leadership, was a ribbon or tape unrolling behind them or being dropped from their hands as they marched. In one case my informant said that he thought of distance actually covered as a clear white tape; distance to the next halting-place ran forward along the ground like a misty web or skein. These men were not leaders, but subordinates responsible for making good so many miles per diem. One can see the reason for their linear conception of progress. Expeditions, as a rule,

string out in single file, and any movement of the leaders is seldom to a flank, but up and down the line.

Speaking from my own experience of the one march I ever had to make in a hurry, my impression at the time, as well as the memory that stayed with me afterwards, was that of the unrolling ribbon. Luckily I had not to worry about supplies, but my single object was to get myself and my coolies out of a certain district as soon as possible. My mind projected itself along an imaginary straight line—in this instance white against dull green. It would be interesting if any of the Polar men who work against white backgrounds would tell us how the idea of their work presents itself to them while they are engaged in it. I have heard that the dogtrain mail-runners of Alaska and Northern Canada sometimes see their winter-trails as short straight lines strung with beads—that is to say, as a diagram of the taut sleigh-traces with dogs attached.

But I think that most travellers do not cast, or do not recall that they cast, their thoughts into mathematical outlines. They retain more or less accurate pictures of incidents that have impressed them personally. I knew one man who said he could run any road that he had marched over, backward between his eyelids like a cinematograph film before he went to sleep. His companions told me that his diary and written work were quite bad; but that they always took his word for the time and place of any event that had happened on the road. Such a gift as this—and some motorists have the rudiments of it—stands at the top of a scale that ends in those disappointing men who, after months of experience, can communicate no more than a hazy recollection of the places where they got food or water

or warmth or shelter. *Punch* has described this type in the man who said: "Rome—Rome. Wasn't that the place where I bought the shocking bad cigars?" It is not at all a bad type to travel with, because it generally gives all its attention to its own duties. A man who carries too many pictures in his head is apt to forget vital things like straps and kettle-lids when the loads are being packed. On the other hand, I have been assured by competent authorities that the camp-cook, if white, ought to be of a sentimental and imaginative disposition. It makes him more generous. I seem to have read lately of a cook whose notion of a twelfth course of a dinner to some returned voyagers was ten boxes of sardines made into a pile with bacon and pastry to match. May one take it that he was imaginative?

I have, not exactly a theory, but an idea, that first-class leaders of expeditions, however definite and urgent their conception of their work, either do not visualise too much or keep their powers of visualisation under control. At least, I do not remember to have heard any men who have led men into a tight place and out again, say to me: "I could see exactly what was going to happen when the canoe swamped or the bridge broke". They usually put it: "*When* the bridge broke or *when* the hippo charged, I did so and so, or gave such and such orders". And there is reason for that, too. An old prospector once warned me: "As long as you've only got yourself to think about you can think as much as you damn-well please. When you've other folks' hides to answer for you must quit thinking for your own amusement." So I should be inclined to say that, however great the strain, responsibility does not

encourage detailed imaginative excursuses on the road —or on any road—while the work is in hand. Later, when a man is boiling down his log and notes into book-form, he falls back on his store of mental pictures, but, in the actual stress of travel, the first-class man as distinguished from the very first-class second-class man —and this is an important distinction—does not, or decides not to, visualise.

There is another useful gift of visualisation not necessarily connected with the executive capacity that may be worth noting: for the reason that it must deal with new material in the years to come. I do not assert that it is impossible to hold intelligent conversation without the help of an atlas. But I *do* say that as soon as men begin to talk about anything that really matters, someone has to go and get the atlas. And when that has been mislaid or hidden, it is interesting to see how far the company can carry on, scribbling and sketching in the fork-and-tablecloth style, without it. One discovers then, that most men keep a rough map in their heads of those parts of the world they habitually patrol, and a more accurate—often a boringly precise one—of the particular corner they have last come out of. Motoring has tremendously increased our powers in this respect; for a man who can read a county can learn to read a country, and so on. Many men, I find, can visualise the Empire on Mercator's projection enough for conversational purposes; and I have sat at the feet of one or two superior men who seemed to be able to spin the 24-inch globe, with steamer-distances, in their heads as required. Ideally, of course, every average man ought to be able to do this. Myself, I am like the rest. I only see the atlas, and that roughly, as far as I have used it.

Everything outside those limits is a cloudy blur; and the atlas that I see in my mind is based on the first atlas —a little cheap blue and yellow one—that I was forced to study. Other men have told me much the same thing about their mental atlases, and they all agree that we visualise our imaginary travels as from sea-level, with specially vivid pictures of certain capes and ports and land-falls. Naturally, so long as we travel by sea, we must embark from a port and look out for land-falls. But the time is not far off when the traveller will know and care just as little whether he is over sea or land as we to-day know and care whether our steamer is over forty-fathom water or the Tuscarora Deep. Then we shall hear the lost ports of New York and Bombay howling like Tarshish and Tyre. Incidentally, too, we shall change all our mental pictures of travel.

The other day I asked half a dozen men at random what picture or diagram the words, "He went down to the Cape", called up in their minds. Three or four of them who had not been there, said it evolved a mind-picture of what they called the "veld"—probably a cloudy composite photograph from illustrated papers. One said he could see the brownish-red outline of Cape Colony as coloured in his private atlas. But one man, who took the road regularly, answered at once by indicating the long curve of the liner's southerly descent, as that is laid down in the chart. It was his mental sign-talk or way-signal. Assuming identical experience and temperament, if that man's grandfather had been asked the same question in the days of the sailing-ship, he would have swung his curve westward to within sight of the Brazil coast, and would have made his southing on the long slant. When that man's son is asked the

same question, he will not describe any curve at all. It will have no more meaning for him than the old coach-road over the downs by Salisbury has for the modern motorist. His way-sign will be one straight line slightly inclined from left to right—from fifty-one nothing North to thirty-three South, and fifteen, whatever it is, East; and his time-conception—that indescribable diagram of time which rises in each man's mind at the mention of a voyage of known length—will be shrunk to a little block or bead or shadow representing forty-eight or fifty hours. And so it will be with all voyages. At present, most men's mental shorthand of the run to India is a zigzag of four: London—Gibraltar; Gibraltar—Port Said; Port Said—Aden; Aden—Bombay; of the Australian voyage; a zigzag of three: the line running straight from Aden to the southern continent generally. These will be all straightened out into single lines, each carrying its own vastly shortened time-conception.

But all this, as you will say, is in the air. Let us leave it there, and consider for a while the illimitable, the fascinating subject of smells in their relation to the traveller. We shall soon have to exchange them for blasts of petrol and atomised castor-oil. Have you noticed whereever a few travellers gather together, one or the other is sure to say: "Do you remember that smell at such and such a place?" Then he may go on to speak of camel—pure camel—one whiff of which is all Arabia; or of the smell of rotten eggs at Hitt on the Euphrates, where Noah got the pitch for the Ark; or of the flavour of drying fish in Burma. Then the company begin to purr like cats at valerian, and, as the books say, "conversation becomes general".

I suggest, subject to correction—there are only two

elementary smells of universal appeal—the smell of burning fuel and the smell of melting grease. The smell, that is, of what man cooks his food over and what he cooks his food *in*. Fuel ranges from coal to cowdung—specially cowdung—and coco-nut husk; grease from butter through *ghi* to palm and coco-nut oil; and these two, either singly or in combination, make the background and furnish the active poison of nearly all the smells which assault and perturb the mind of the wayfaring man returned to civilisation. I rank wood-smoke first, since it calls up more, more intimate and varied memories, over a wider geographical range, to a larger number of individuals, than any other agent that we know. My powers are limited, but I think I would undertake to transport a quarter of a million Englishmen to any point in South Africa, from the Zambezi to Cape Agulhas, with no more elaborate vehicle than a box of matches, a string or two of rifle cordite, a broken-up biscuit-box, some chips of a creosoted railway sleeper, and a handful of dried cowdung, and to land each man in the precise spot he had in his mind. And that is only a small part of the world that wood-smoke controls. A whiff of it can take us back to forgotten marches over unnamed mountains with disreputable companions; to day-long halts beside flooded rivers in the rain; wonderful mornings of youth in brilliantly lighted lands where everything was possible—and generally done; to uneasy wakings under the low desert moon and on top of cruel, hard pebbles; and, above all, to that God's own hour, all the world over, when the stars have gone out and it is too dark to see clear, and one lies with the fumes of last night's embers in one's nostrils—lies and waits for a new horizon to heave itself up against a

new dawn. Wood-smoke magic works on everyone according to his experience. I live in a wood-smoke country, and I know how men, otherwise silent, become suddenly and surprisingly eloquent under its influence.

And next to wood-smoke for waking rampant "wanderlust" comes the smell of melting grease—such a smell or bouquet of smells as one may gather outside a London fried-fish shop. It is less sentimental and vague in its appeal than wood-smoke, but it hits harder. Where grease is melting, something is being cooked, and that means a change from tinned food for one night at any rate. It is an opulent, a kaleidoscopic, a semitic smell of immense range and variety of colour. Sometimes it reconstructs big covered bazaars of well-stocked cities with the blue haze hanging in the domes; or it resurrects little Heaven-sent single stalls picked up by the roadside, where one can buy penny bottles of sauce or a paper of badly needed buttons. It implies camels kneeling to unload; belts and straps being loosened; contented camp-followers dodging off to buy supplies —turmeric assafœtida, curry-stuffs; men washing their hands in sand before dipping them into the greasy pewter platters. And the next gust or surge of it may be pure Central Asia—thick and choking as butter-lamps before a Tibetan shrine—a Tibetan shrine, with frost in the air, one star on the tip of a mountain, and a brown-cloaked Bhotyali rustling up through dry maize-stalks to sell a chicken. Or it may thin out to a mere echo of an appeal that calls up all the pulse and thrill and clamour of the true tropic night—blazing moonlight, black shadow, the roar of the tree-toads, a touch of Chinese matting, a gust of jasmine or champak, and the languid puff of a warm phosphorescent sea.

To me, as to others, a fried-fish shop can speak multitudinously for all the East from Cairo to Singapore; and I have heard West Coast men say that, when the smell turns bitter, it will sometimes duplicate the smell of their palm-oil chop, and cause them to re-live horrible depressing evenings by the light of kerosene lamps, hung under corrugated iron roofs of factories beside brown rivers that bubble. It does not cover the South Seas, that wonderful fifth quarter of the world, where, I believe, the smell of first appeal is burning coco-nut husk, a heavy loading of coco-nut oil, and a dash of salt coral-reef. But it is no mean magician, as we all know.

And so much for universals. Coming now to smells of particular appeal, what would most vividly remind a Polar explorer of past experiences? I suggest that ether-like smell given off by the flame of a big spirit-lamp when it is flattened out against the heated metal cooking-plate above—an unmixed smell, simple of itself, like Falstaff's sack. I should put the limits of this appeal roughly as from the Seventies to either pole. From the Seventies to the Sixties runs that belt of unsanctified latitudes which are the stamping-ground of the winds, the wilderness and the fringes of the restless ice, all linked together, in the minds of men who know it, by the desolate smell of the stranded berg as it piles up reeking with ooze gouged off the sea-floors. Melville, of the *Jeannette*, once told me that it would "send your heart into your boots—if you hadn't eaten them already". At the Sixties and down to Labrador, it seems to me we reach kindly timber and a suggestion of meat on the hoof. The smell of stranded ice is mixed with the clear breath of seas that are not always frozen, and the

acrid tang of a raw moose-hide being passed back and forth through wood-smoke to cure it—this last as characteristic as the smell of home-made rimpje on a Dutch farm at the other side of the world. A little lower, the appeals thicken and become more complex. I suggest evergreens sweating in the sun; birchwood smoke; the oily bark itself; pine-gums, resin and tallow melted together; the clean-swept smell of milky-green snow-water pouring over pebble bars; and not so far in the background, a suspicion, or a camp-shifting certainty, of skunk. Here—say 50° N. and 65° W.—we meet our friend the horse, or rather he pushes his way into the rotten-wood smudge (that is an awakening smell, too) beside us. He keeps us company west through the grass-scented prairie air till we are more conscious of him and his saddlery than any other flavour in the landscape.

There is a heart-searching little motif of five notes—horse; old saddlery; coffee; fried bacon; and tobacco (from cut plug to maize-leaf cigarettes)—that can carry a man down from high dry camps in the Selkirks, or wet ones in Oregon, down and down over red spicy dust and dead white dust, through the scent of sage-brush and sharp peppery euphorbias, down to the torrid goat-scented South where fried beans, incense, and the abominable brassy smell of pulque will pass him on to all the forlorn brood of mangrove, foreshore and yellow-fever stinks, until he leaves his horse on the beach, and the Tropics lift up his heart with the wholesome rasp of sunbaked coral and dried fish.

Forgive me, ladies and gentlemen! I will not go on with the catalogue, though I feel like the commercial traveller in the story, who said: "If you don't care to

look at my samples, d'you mind *my* having a look at 'em. It's so long since I've seen them."

It is probable that the future will have no place for these links with past delights and labours—that they will be forgotten like the labours themselves—as we have forgotten the smell of home-made soap or the whistle and rap of the flails on a threshing-floor. Only a little while ago a man wrote me from Northern Canada: "We have broken into a new belt of wheat 40 miles wide—and we have left the horse behind!" Even now one can charge by rail in less than a week through the exquisitely graduated and significant series of smells, that lie like iridescence on an oyster-shell, over the last 2500 miles of South Africa, and one can return with no more than a general impression of sunshine and coal-smoke. And, as people always say in the middle of a revolution: "We are only at the beginning of things".

Conceive for a moment a generation wholly divorced from all known smells of land and sea-travel—a generation which will climb into and drop down from the utterly odourless upper airs, unprepared in any one of its senses for the flavour, which is the spirit, of the country it descends upon! Everything that we have used till now has allowed us time for a little mental adjustment of horizons—time and contact with the changing earth and waters under us. In the future, there will be neither mental adjustment nor horizons as we have understood them: not any more of the long days that prove and prepare, nor the nights that terrify and make sane again, neither sweat nor suffering, nor the panic knowledge of isolation beyond help—none, so far as we can guess, of the checks that have hitherto conditioned all our travels.

And hitherto our life has only taught us to love what we have suffered for or with. One loves a stray dog after one has had to sit up with him for a night or two. How much more that corner of the Earth to which we have given our very hide and health and reputation!

And it is the same on the human side. Men like a man who has shown himself a pleasant companion through a week's walking-tour. They worship the man, who over thousands of miles for hundreds of days, through renewed difficulties and efforts, has brought them without friction, arrogance, or dishonour, to the victory proposed, or to the higher glory of unshaken defeat. Anything like a man can bustle hounds after a sinking fox, but it takes something like a man to bring them home with their sterns up after they have lost him, or—seen him run into by another pack! It is one of the mysteries of personality that virtue should go out of certain men to uphold—literally to ennoble—their companions even while their own nerves are like live wire, and their own mouths are full of the taste of fever and fatigue. There is no headmark by which we can recognise such men before they have proved themselves. Their secret is incommunicable. One man, apparently without effort, inspans the human equivalent of "three blind 'uns and a bolter" and makes them do miracles. Another, working hard all the time, scientifically reduces half a dozen picked men to the level of sulky, disloyal schoolboys. And everybody wonders how it happened.

The explanations are as bewildering as the facts. A man was asked some time ago why he invariably followed a well-known man into most uncomfortable situations. He replied: "All the years I have known So-and-so, I've never known him to say whether he

was cold or hot, wet or dry, sick or well; *but* I've never known him forget a man who was." Here is another reply to a similar question about another leader, who was notoriously a little difficult to get on with. One of his followers wrote: "So-and-so is all you say and more, and he grows worse as he grows older; but he will take the blame of any mistake any man of his makes, and he doesn't care what lie he tells to save him". And when I wrote to find out why a man whom I knew preferred *not* to go out with another man whom I also knew, I got this illuminating diagnosis: "So-and-so is not afraid of anything on earth except the newspapers. So I have a previous engagement." In the face of these documents, it looks as though self-sacrifice, loyalty, and a robust view of moral obligations go far to make a leader, the capacity to live alone and inside himself being taken for granted.

But then come the accidents for which no allowance is made—or can be made. A good man, who has held a disorganised crowd together at the expense of his own vitality, may be tried, slowly or suddenly, beyond his limit, till he breaks down, and, as Hakluyt says, is either "ignominiously reported or exceedingly condemned". There is a limit for every man, an edge beyond which he must not go. But here at home only the doctor, the nurses, and the clergymen see what happens next—not the caravan, not the grinning coolies, and the whole naked landscape—and afterwards all the world!

However, these things, and worse, are part of the rule of the road. They have never hindered men from leading or following. Even in these days a man has but to announce he is going to gamble against death for a few months on totally inadequate cover, and thousands

of hitherto honest Englishmen will fawn and intrigue and, if necessary, lie like anyone you choose to think of—in order to be allotted one life-share in the venture.

But what of the future? Into what terms will this world-old, foot-pound energy of travel translate itself under the new conditions? Here is our position. Up to the present we have been forced to move in two dimensions by the help of the Three Beasts of Burden and a few live coals in a pot. Now we perceive that we can move in three dimensions, and the possibilities of our new freedom distract and disturb us in all relations. This is because our minds are still hobbled and knee-haltered by inherited memories of what were held to be immutable facts—distance, height and depth, separation, homesickness, the fear of accident and foul weather. The sea, in spite of our attacks, is still unplumbed, salt, and estranging; a mountain-range means so many days' delay or *détour;* so many extra rations, sure changes of heat and cold. The desert and the wilderness have still to be approached by cautious sap and mine—depôt and cache. Where there is no water for 200 miles, we shake our head and limp round it. A little while ago we should have done so, humbly, glad to be excused. Now we step out of our path grudgingly, resentfully, resolute to come back again and take no refusal.

Presently—very presently—we shall come back and convert 200 miles across any part of the Earth into its standardised time equivalent, precisely as we convert 5 miles with infantry in column, 10 with cavalry on the march, 12 in a Cape cart, or 50 in a car—that is to say, into two hours. And whether there be one desert or a dozen mountain-ranges in that 200 miles will not affect our time-table by five minutes.

Month by month the Earth shrinks actually, and, what is more important, in imagination. We know it by the slide and crash of unstable material all around us. For the moment, but only for the moment, the new machines are outstripping mankind. We have cut down enormously—we shall cut down inconceivably—the world-conception of time and space, which is the big flywheel of the world's progress. What wonder that the great world-engine, which we call Civilisation, should race and heat a little, or that the onlookers who see it take charge should be a little excited, and, therefore, inclined to scold? You could witness precisely the same flurry in any engine-room on the Atlantic this evening, where a liner happens to be pitching her propellers out of water. For the moment the machines are developing more power than has been required for their duties. But just as soon as humanity can get its breath, the machines' load will be increased and they will settle smoothly to their load and most marvellous output.

Frankly, one is not so much interested in the achievements of the future as in the men of the present who are already scouting and reporting along its fantastic skyline. All, or nearly all, that can be accomplished by the old means has been won and put to general account. The old mechanism is scrapped: the moods and emotions that went with it follow. Only the spirit of man carries on, unaltered and unappeasable. There will arise—they are shaping themselves even now—risks to be met as cruel as any that Hudson or Scott faced; dreams as world-wide as Columbus or Cecil Rhodes dreamed, to be made good or to die for; and decisions to be taken as splendidly terrible as that which Drake clinched by

Magellan, or Oates a little farther south. There is no break in the line, no loads are missing; the men of the present have begun the discovery of the New World with the same devoutly careless passion as their predecessors completed the discovery of the Old.

XIII

THE WAR AND THE SCHOOLS

O foreign-tongued woodlands, we confide to you a child of that generation for whom their fathers prepared such distant graves.

THE WAR AND THE SCHOOLS

Winchester College: December 1915

I HAVE been honoured by a request that I should help to dedicate this rifle range to the memory of an old Wykehamist—George Cecil, Ensign of Grenadiers, killed in action. Cecil was not very long before your time, as once time was reckoned, but since each month now equals a year he dates, so far as you are concerned, to the beginning of history. He was one of that original army in France which was sacrificed almost to a man, in order that England might gain time to create those armies which, till then, she had not thought necessary. He was killed just before the long retreat from Mons came to an end—killed leading his platoon in the woods round Villers Cotterets fifteen months ago.

He did no more and no less than thousands have done since, and many thousands are preparing themselves to do; for it would be difficult to find a household in England to-day free from the fact or the fear of a similar loss.

Yet in one respect he differed from some of his fellows. He was devoted by instinct to the profession of arms, and had made it his consuming interest and study, not through any child's delight in its glitter, but because he absolutely believed in the imminence of that very war in which he fell. It was curious in a world full of wise grown men, who would not or could not under-

stand, to listen to his unshaken conviction on this matter; and to watch the extraordinarily thorough way in which he set about fitting himself to meet it. Both at Sandhurst and during his short time in the Service, he toiled, as I know, at the details of his profession with the passion of a boy, and studied the wider aspects of it with the judgement of a man. I remember a couple of years ago the boy, for he was little more then, saying to me across an atlas: "We shall be sent to prolong the French left—*here*. We shall not have enough men to do it, and we shall be cut up. But with any luck I ought to be in it." His fortune allowed him to fight with the best for the best. He is among the first of that vast company of young dead who live without change in the hearts of those who love them.

I speak now to such of you as propose to follow him. Being who you are, you realise what your Foundation has taught its scholars from the beginning—that as Freedom is indispensable, so is Liberty impossible, to a gentleman. This is knowledge which will serve you when you go out into a world whose every landmark has been violently removed, and every distinction save one—an aristocracy of blood—emptied of all significance. Thanks to the unwisdom of your forefathers, the rescue of a wrecked civilisation has been laid upon you and those very little senior to you. Were I addressing men of my own age, I should say that this task was a heavy one. But I speak to youth which can accomplish everything, precisely because it accepts no past, obeys no present, and fears no future. For that reason, I do not doubt your future, nor as much of our future as is in your keeping. It is for your generation to make well sure that those who have defied God and man shall

learn to walk humbly before both as long as fear can endure.

The making of the new world that will rise out of these present judgements will fall to your generation also—not only to those in the field, but to those who, for any reason, are afraid that they can never take part in the great work. They need have no fear. After the brute issue of the war shall have been decided on the fronts, all men, all capacities, all attainments, will be called upon to the uttermost to establish civilisation. For then the work will begin of reconstructing, not only England and the Empire, but the whole world—on a scale which outruns imagination. Every aspect of life as we have known life hitherto will have disappeared. National boundaries and national sympathies, powers, responsibilities, and habits of thought will have shifted and been transformed. Our neighbours of yesterday will be our blood-brethren of that to-morrow, bound to us, as we throughout the Empire are bound to each other, by the most far-reaching and intimate ties of common loss and common devotion, and labouring side by side to bring order out of the appalling chaos that humanity has drawn upon itself.

Let no one, whatever his physical disabilities, or however meanly he may think of himself, let no one dream for a moment he will not be needed, and urgently needed, in the new order of things. His duty is to prepare himself now. This is harder for him than for the combatant officer, since an officer's work is continually tested against actual warfare. The men of the second line—the civil reserve that will take over when the sword is sheathed—have no such check, nor have they the officer's spur of visible responsibility. Their turn

comes later. Till it comes they must work on honour, that they may be ready to uphold the honour of civilisation. They have not long to wait. In a few years some of you must be working with our Allies at the administration of what may be left of Central Europe, where you will have to invent new systems to meet new conditions almost as swiftly as, during the war, new weapons were invented to meet new forms of attack. I say in a few years, because the youngest captain I know is twenty-one; the youngest I have heard of is nineteen. And so it will be on the civil side. The war has given the youth of all our world a step in age—additional seniority of three years. You may say—though your relatives are more likely to think it—that your youth has been taken from you. I prefer to put it, that your manhood has been thrust on you early—at the sword's point. Fit yourself for it then, not according to the measure of your years, but to the measure of our world's great need.

You have seen and realised the very things which young Cecil felt would befall. As far as his short life allowed he ordered himself so that he might not be overwhelmed by them when they were upon him. He died—as many of you too will die—but he died knowing the issue for which he died. It is well to die for one's country. But that is not enough. It is also necessary that, so long as he lives, a man should give to his country, as George Cecil gave, a mind and soul neither ignorant nor inadequate.

XIV

THE MAGIC SQUARE

Certain it is men have fallen upon each other from the first. This is a business which the Gods lay upon the Young; leaving the Old to weary with words the unreturning phalanx.

THE MAGIC SQUARE

Household Brigade Officers' Cadet Corps, Bushey: 1917

MY LECTURE this morning deals with the origin, development, and moral significance of Drill among mankind from the earliest ages.

What put the idea of drill into man's head at the beginning of things? As Shakespeare so beautifully observes, "What made man first drill upon the Square, with Sergeants running round and round?"

And when I say man, I do not mean any sort of man that we are acquainted with, or of which we have any record. The man I ask you to imagine is a prehistoric person with a vocabulary of a few score words, who had not long given up living in trees and who moved in little family groups of small associated tribes, in or on the edge of immense primeval forests, much as gorillas and chimpanzees do to-day in the tropical African forests. *I'*m going to call him George Robey.[1] He was a creature who still fought with his teeth and nails like the animals: but he could break off a branch, trim it, and use it as a club or a lance; he could throw stones with accuracy; scrape out holes in the ground; plait or weave branches together; swim; and climb trees. Besides this, he possessed what you and I would call a reasoning mind. He knew what he was doing, he could remember what he had done, and he could estimate the consequences of

[1]Mr. George Robey was at that time acting in a delightful sketch of Prehistoric Man.

what he might do. With this equipment and an omnivorous appetite, he had to make his living or die. War wasn't man's business in the beginning. No animal makes a business of war except for food. Man's business in those days was food. He *had* to hunt, and he *had* to understand the tactics of hunting.

That is why tactics, in my opinion, were developed before drill. An eminent tactician once told me that all tactics boiled down either to some sort of frontal feint with a flank diversion, or some sort of ambush into which the enemy could be pushed or drawn. We may be sure that George Robey found out very early in the day that if some of the family—the younger members for choice—capered and shouted in front of any large eatable animal, the rest of the group had a chance to run in on the beast's flank and kill it. That's elementary. When wolves are hunting a single buffalo, or moose, or elk, that shows fight, they employ just these tactics; and I believe they also send scouts upwind to drive the buck down to the main pack. Those were George Robey's simple but sound tactics. Frontal feint with flank attack, or a retirement or a push towards ground where the quarry could be made helpless. Result, if successful, a good meal; if not, hunger.

Now, how could he get his men on to the hunting grounds without making too much noise, which would scare the game; and without leaving too conspicuous a trail, which might bring some dangerous wild beast after them? The simplest—the only—way of walking through thick jungle, as our troops knew in the Cameroons campaign, is in single file—down the bush-paths, if there are any. Where there are no paths, or where the ground is boggy or covered with fallen trees, each man

has to step in the track of the next ahead. If he doesn't, he steps on the next man's heels, where he may throw him off his balance, and—what is more important—make a noise. So, whether he likes it or not, a man in single file has to keep step. The penalty for not keeping step when keeping step was first invented, was, in all probability, a severe reprimand on the head with a club.

"And thus, my beloved 'earers", as Mr. Jorrocks says in his sporting lectures—thus did George Robey's company learn to keep step, which is the first essential of all drill.

And, after all, what does drill come to? This—the step, which includes keeping step—the line, by which I mean any sort of line, close or extended—the wheel, which includes a line changing direction—and, most important of all, because it is the foundation that makes every move possible, forming fours. There you have it all, gentlemen—the four sides of the Magic Square. The Step and keeping step—the Line, close or extended—Wheeling and changing direction—and Forming Fours. S.W.L.F. So We Learned Fighting.

Single line ahead—single file—is the weakest of all formations. By the way, a man in the German East Africa campaign told me that one of his columns, which was about a mile and a half long, moving in single file through heavy bush, was charged and scattered eleven times in one day by rhinoceroses. At the end of that time he was a little fed up with big game. This will give you some idea of what the wretched George Robey had to put up with when he took his company through the forest in single file; for I believe the rhino of George's day, so far as we can judge from its fossil remains, stood

about seven feet at the shoulder. There was only one advantage in single file. George's human enemies were as helpless to attack him as his own lot would have been to attack them. On open ground or in the big natural glades and parks inside forests, single line ceased to have any advantage. George might want to beat over a clearing in the woods for small game, or it might be necessary to drive some big animal that had been marked down by scouts towards some place where another detachment of the tribe was waiting for it. Those things would depend on the nature of the ground; but, one way or another, George had to get his whole string of men into some sort of line abreast before he could beat for game. Listening to instructors on the Square, I have often wondered whether George Robey, with his limited vocabulary, didn't blow up with suppressed indignation. But it is more likely that he bit the nearest man on the ear.

Consider for a moment what that early drill involved! Obviously, the whole line had to draw clear of the woods and halt. Then it had to extend till it had stretched all across the clearing they were going to beat. It had to keep touch, because if it didn't the game would bolt back through the gaps when the drive began. Next, at a given signal, the line had to rise and rush forward to start the small game—or, if it was big game, to make just enough noise to keep the beast moving towards the desired ambush. To appreciate the magnitude of the problem involved, gentlemen, you have only to go out in a five-acre field with half a dozen friends and try to catch an old and cunning horse who doesn't want to be caught. Then you'll understand what the first drill-instructor had to contend with. There must

have been some reprimands delivered, in the morning of the world, that beat anything at Caterham, where, I have heard, "they tame lions".

Under these circumstances, what did George Robey do? He did what any thinking being would have done after he had missed his meat-ration three times running. Remember, his reasoning mind made him realise that if this silly catch-as-catch-can business went on the tribe would get no food. So he said to the younger men: "We will practise the motions of hunting game several times over before we hunt game in earnest. Report to me outside the caves at sunrise to-morrow." That was the first, cold, grey dawn of Drill in the world!

It must have been a slow process, but—what a thing to have seen being born! Remember, the tribe had already been forced to learn how to keep step and form some sort of line to beat with. Imagine George Robey when it first dawned on him that if all his men brought down their right or left foot at the same time, they could make noise enough to scare off a marauding wild beast or a human enemy without fighting! Imagine the first time he taught fifty or even twenty men to do it every time he shouted: "Stamp!" An animal often stamps when it is angry or wishes to frighten somebody; but no herd of animals ever stamp simultaneously and move forward one pace at each stamp. That was the first exhibition of organized "frightfulness" that the world ever saw.

Let us go a step further. George Robey has managed, by bites and blows and howls, to get a few individuals to stand in line; at first, shoulder to shoulder; next, with a sufficient interval between each to allow one to handle his club without hitting his neighbour. He has

also taught the line to stamp with its feet at each step when he tells 'em to. He can do a lot with this formation. If the individuals in the line turn right or left, the line becomes a single file again that can make its way through the forest like a snake. If it advances as a line it thoroughly beats out all the ground in front of it, and can extend and envelop either flank of the enemy, like the old cow's-horn formation of the Zulu *Impi*. If any animal breaks through the first line during the beat, there is nothing easier than to put a second line or a third behind it, at whatever distance may be advisable. And when both lines, or all lines, stamp their feet at once the noise is twice as impressive. Consequently, on account of these wonderful inventions, George Robey's tribe gets plenty to eat, and is less worried by wild beasts or enemies.

But I don't think human enemies entered largely into man's calculations at first. By what one can make out from the manners and customs of the gorillas and the larger apes of to-day, there could not have been much actual fighting; and what there was, was rarely to the death, unless, of course, it was two males fighting for a female. I take it that it was a long while before there was organised war of man against man in the world. I fancy the earliest forms of drill were evolved originally more on account of man's necessities as a hunter than from his needs as a warrior. Keeping in step and beating over ground in line are hunting dodges. Now for the wheel, or change of direction, and the marking time that goes with it.

Some years ago I saw a line of beaters in one of the Native States in India beating a big jungle to drive game up to the shooting-stand, where the Raja and his

guests sat with rifles. They had put up a lot of buck and small game, and a panther or two, which they wished to head off down one particular rocky ravine. About fifty of them were acting as "stops", lying hidden among rocks and bushes out on one flank of the drive. As the game began to come through, and showed signs of scattering over the open plain, the men rose, formed line, and wheeled inward, shouting and waving, till all the game turned left into the ravine. These men ran at a quick stooping shuffle, but they kept their line perfectly. What struck me most when the first man—the pivot man—of the wheel, and the others, came into their places on the new alignment parallel with the side of the ravine, was the way they danced and capered with excitement. But they always came down in the same place! It was like a lunatic asylum marking time. As I watched—and I can see those wild, little black legs now—it occurred to me that marking-time, as practised in the civilised armies of the world, must be just the last, last remnant of that wild dance of excited hunters, coming into position when a drive halts, ready to lead off on either foot as soon as the drive goes forward again. I have a theory, based on what I have read about primitive dances and children's games, and some of the figures in square dances like quadrilles and lancers, that George Robey may have originally taught his line of men to wheel on parade by making them hold hands. However he came by the notion, it was a splendid idea, and it completed three sides of the Magic Square—the Step—the Line—the Wheel or incline.

But if you ask me how George Robey conceived the idea of forming fours, I tell you frankly I am up a tree. I argue that it must have been quite a late development.

Here are my reasons. First, the world wasn't fitted for route-marching in fours in those days. Fours require something wider than a bush-track. Single file would be the natural formation till tracks were developed or men lived in open country. Secondly, column of fours isn't directly a hunting formation like the line or the wheel. It's only a means to an end. Thirdly, it was a long, long time before primitive man learned to count. And the odds are that it was another long time before he counted further than his own fingers and toes, as primitive tribes do to-day. The Esquimaux word for twenty-one is about seven syllables long, and literally translated it means "one finger on the other man's hand". The word for fifty-three is *inup-pinga-jugson-arkanek-pingasut*, which means "on the third man, on the first foot, three". This would make numbering off a platoon last as long as the War.

So the nature of the ground, the nature of the formation, and the difficulty of counting have delayed the epoch-making discovery of forming fours. It has been lost and rediscovered many times since; but the more one looks at the evolution, the more one is impressed by its astounding simplicity and cunning. Here are two lines of men, one behind the other. Somebody utters a magic howl, or yelp, or bark—the sound of words of command hasn't altered much since the beginning—and, behold, the lines become a compact and supple column, capable of moving in any direction, and capable, if anyone says the magic word, of becoming two lines once more! Look at it from primitive man's point of view, and you'll see what a miracle it must have been the first time it was shown to the tribe. But how—how—how—did George Robey get the idea; and, having got it,

how did he push, and pull, and haul his men into fours? My own theories on the subject would be too fantastic, probably, for your acceptance. I merely suggest that forming fours was originally not a hunting formation at all, but a portion of ceremonial drill which later was employed, when going to battle or the hunt, on account of its many conveniences.

I have used the words "ceremonial drill".

Side by side with this practical drill, or rehearsal for the business of hunting and war, there developed the rudiments of what, later on, became ceremonial drill. Why? Here is my reason. The natural instinct of a man, after he has done anything worth talking about, is to talk about it; and George Robey was extremely natural. When he had finished a successful day's hunting or had cleverly knocked an enemy on the head, he went home and told his wife and the children all about it. Like all persons with a limited vocabulary, he had to act most of his story and piece it out, precisely as children do, with innumerable repetitions of the same word. His tale wouldn't grow less in the telling. Tales don't. His actual fight was probably a crude affair; but he would act it at home before the family with stately leaps and bounds to represent the death-scuffle, and with elaborate wavings of his club and thrustings with his lance to show how he did his man in. At the end of his story there would certainly be a solemn walk round the fire to let the females admire him and the young bloods be impressed with him. It's too long a subject to go into to-night; but you can take it that when a male animal has accomplished a kill of any kind, he generally indulges in a sort of triumphal demonstration—a tense, highly braced walk or promenade round and above the carcass, especially

if there is a female of his species near by. At the very first, when George Robey was only the hairy, low-browed head of a family, he would declaim and prance alone. Later, as the families grew into groups and tribes, the other men who had assisted at the hunt or the battle would have their say, and their shout, and their walk-round, in the open spaces before the caves. It may be that the idea of forming fours was first originated at those processional walk-rounds where there was open space to manœuvre and safety in which to correct errors. You can imagine how, as these men danced and leaped, they would all sing like children: "This is the way we kill a bison. This is how we stand up to a tiger. This is how we tackle men." The drama would be accepted as the real thing by the women and the juniors, till at last the bison, or the tiger, or the man-killing charade would become a religious ceremonial—a thing to be acted, said, or sung before going up to battle or chase, with invocations to great hunters in the past, and so on. It would end by being a magic ritual, sure to bring good luck if it was properly performed. And so far as that ritual, with its dances, and chants, and stampings, and marches round, gave the men cohesion and confidence, it would go far towards success in the field. That principle holds good to this day.

I was at Edinburgh Castle a few weeks ago, watching a squad marching in slow time, and doing it rather badly. The instructor told 'em so. Then he said: "You're lazy! You're lazy! Point that toe! There's not a *fut* among ye!" It is hard work trying to get recruits to reproduce in cold blood, on a cold morning, in cold boots, something of the wonderful grace and poise and arrested motion of the bare-footed, perfectly balanced,

perfectly healthy primitive man rejoicing over his kill. The nearest thing I ever saw to the genuine article must have been sham-fight among Kaffirs in a compound at the Kimberley Diamond-fields. It finished with a walk-round in slow time, and I remember that every Kaffir's foot shot out as straight as the forefoot of a trotting horse. You could almost hear the hip and knee and ankle-joint click as the toe was pointed. Now, it's a far cry from a Kaffir compound to a Guard Mount at Buckingham Palace; but if you stand three-quarters on to the Colours as they come out of the gate with the Guard, you'll catch just a far-off shadow of what the march in slow time originally sprung from, and what it meant.

Very good! Now, I've sketched roughly the earliest developments of certain evolutions of the earliest men that later developed into field and ceremonial drill. I have given the outlines of the Magic Square—the Step. the Line, the Wheel, and the Forming Fours, which is the foundation of the whole mystery of drill. These things, according to my theory, were first discovered in the very dawn of human consciousness on earth.

Pass on a few thousand, or hundred thousand years, and we reach the beginnings of some sort of civilisation. By this time man has begun to specialise in his work. Everybody doesn't hunt; everybody doesn't fight; everybody doesn't prepare his own food or make his own weapons for himself. Experience has shown mankind that it is more convenient to tell off certain men for these duties.

Here we come to a curious fact in human nature.

As soon as any man is detailed for a particular job—that is to say, a duty that he has to perform for somebody else's sake—he gets, whether he likes it or not, the

beginnings of an ideal of conduct. He may loathe the job; but that reasoning mind that I've mentioned makes him uncomfortable in himself if he neglects the job. The worst of it is that any being who knows what he is doing, remembers what he has done, and can estimate the probable consequence of what he is going to do, knows also what he *ought* to do. That's the beginning of Conscience. I grant you it's an infernal nuisance; but it's true. As a compensation, all men have a tendency to glorify and make much of their own special duty, no matter how humble they or the job may be.

But the primitive warrior was far from humble. He was a man set apart by his strength, skill, or courage, for work on which the very existence of his tribe depended. As such, he was entitled to extra or more varied rations in order that he might do that work properly. Primitive tribes at the present day have long lists of certain foods and special portions of game which are forbidden to be eaten by the women, or by the men before they come to manhood. The fighting men of the tribe are freed from any restrictions on this head, and the best cuts and joints are reserved for them—like the Captain's Wing. Three years ago, scientific men called these restrictions the outcome of savage superstition. Now, we have food-regulations of our own, and, you will observe, the rationing of the Army and Navy is the most important matter of all, because the safety of the tribe depends upon it.

Besides these advantages, the primitive fighting man had behind him an enormous mass of tradition and ritual, and song and dance and ceremony handed down through generation to generation from prehistoric days, which dealt with everything that he did in the

performance of his duties or in the preparation for his duties. The crude drills and hunting rehearsals of George Robey's time had developed into complicated sacred dances of fabulous antiquity. Every detail connected with war had its special rite or incantation. The warrior himself, his clothes, the paints he used for personal decoration, his weapons, his form of attack, his particular fashion of marking or mutilating his enemy after death, his war-cry, the charms that protected him in battle—were all matters of the deepest importance on which the best brains of mankind had spent centuries and centuries of thought, with the object—conscious or unconscious—of creating and improving the *morale* of the individual set apart to fight for the tribe. To-day, these rituals have faded out of the memory of civilised mankind altogether. But, in spite of time and change, one can still trace in our modern days shadows here and there of customs and ceremonial dating from the birth of time—customs which still persist among us because, mark you, they concern the individual and collective *morale* of the warrior—the man set apart to fight for the safety of the tribe.

I give you three instances.

I. It is an offence to draw one's sword in Mess, just as it is a gross liberty to examine or handle any man's sword without first asking his permission.

Why?

Because the Sword is, above all weapons, the most ancient and most holy. Why? Because it was the terrible weapon with the cutting edge and the thrusting point which first superseded the stick and the club among mankind, and gave the tribes that had it power over the tribes that had not. The old fairy-tales of magic swords

that cut off people's heads of themselves run back to that dim and distant date when some sword-using tribe broke in upon and scuppered some tribe of club-using primitives. Through thousands and thousands of years the Sword—the manufactured weapon which cannot be extemporised out of a branch, like the club; nor out of a branch and a strip of leather or sinew like the bow—this expensive hand-made Sword has been personal to its owner, slung to his body by day, ready to his hand by night, a thing prayed over and worshipped—the visible shrine, so to speak, of the personal honour of the man who wielded it—the weapon set apart for the man who is set apart for the business of war.

II. It is an offence to mention a woman's name in Mess. Why? Because the warrior's work being war, and the one thing furthest from war being woman, it follows that at no time since fighting began was the warrior encouraged to think of women while preparing for, or engaged in, his job. Because, when the warrior went to war, he was forbidden—as he is forbidden to-day among savages—to have anything to do with women for a certain length of time before starting. The idea of women, and therefore, the name of any woman, was considered distracting, weakening, to a warrior, and for that reason was absolutely forbidden—tabu—to him not only in the field, but also in his ceremonial gatherings with his equals—the men set apart for the business of war.

III. It is extraordinarily difficult to prevent ragging in the Army. Why? Because as soon as men were set apart for the work of fighting, it was necessary for them to find out the character, powers of endurance, and resistance to pain of the young men who from time

to time joined them. For that reason, there grew up all the world over, a system of formally initiating young men into the tribe by a series of tests, varying in severity, which ranged—as they do among primitive tribes to-day—from mere flogging to being hung, head down, over smoke, burning on various parts of the body, or being swung from the ground by hooks inserted through their muscles. There were also other tests—spiritual as well as physical. You can see a trace of them in the mediaeval idea of the candidate for knighthood, watching his arms before the altar of a church, generally full of tombs, from sunset to sunrise. Men reasoned logically enough: "If a man can't stand our peace-time tests, he'll fail us in war. Let's see what he *can* stand." Nowadays, young men argue—or, rather, they don't argue, they feel: "So-and-so looks rather an ass; or is rather a beast; or carries too much side. Let's rag him." Then they turn his room inside out, or rub harness-paste into his hair, or sit him in a bath, or make him dance the fox-trot, as the case may be. If he loses his temper he falls in their opinion. If he keeps it, and pays back the rag with interest later on, they say he is a good sort. I'm not defending ragging—I've known cases where everyone who took part in it ought to have been R.T.W.[1] I'm only giving you the primitive reason for the performance which to-day has been watered down into a "rag". It rose out of a test that was of vital importance to the men who were set apart for the business of war.

I have tried to make clear that even from the earliest ages, the warrior has been a man set apart for a definite

[1]Returned to his unit.

purpose, and surrounded by a definite ritual from which, as you know, he is not permitted to escape. The reason for this is very simple. I will summarise it.

The earliest drill was born of the tactics, first of hunting, then of war. The notion of hunting and fighting in accordance with some preconceived plan—that is to say, an ideal of conduct—was developed and taught in the ceremonial drills and dances before and after hunting and fighting. Then came the period of specialisation, when certain men fought for the tribe—in other words, offered themselves as sacrifices for the tribe. They hoped, of course, to sacrifice the enemy; but if they failed in that, their own bodies, their own lives, would be the sacrifice.

People who think a great deal and know very little will tell you that mankind, as a rule, don't take kindly to the idea of sacrificing themselves unless there is an advantage to be gained from it. But it is worth noting that there is hardly any people in the world so degraded that it cannot appreciate the idea of sacrifice in others, and there are few races or tribes in the world whose legends of their origin or whose religion does not include the story of some tremendous sacrifice made by a hero or demi-god for their sakes. Most of the stories describe at length how the hero or demi-god prepared himself for the sacrifice.

Now, if you think for a moment, you will see that there were only two people in the tribe who were permanently and officially concerned in the theory and practice of sacrifice. They were the Priest, who was also the doctor or the medicine man; and the fighting-man. The Priest knew the charms and spells that would protect the warrior from hurt in battle, as well as the herbs

and dressings that would cure him if he were hurt. Most important of all, he knew how the warrior would stand with the Gods of the tribe after his death. If he had died well, the Gods would be pleased. If he had died badly, the Gods would be angry. In other words, whatever ideals of conduct existed in the tribe, the Priest upheld them. The Priest sacrificed fruits, animals, or human beings to the spirits of the great hunters and fighters of old. And because savages are not infidels, he sacrificed also to the unknown gods, who are above all the demi-gods. But the warrior, remember, stood ready to sacrifice himself. He more than any other needed preparation and setting apart for his task.

If one compares the ritual and the code of conduct required of the Priest with that required of the warrior, one is struck by the curious likeness between them, even at the present time.

The good Priest is required to offer up prayer several times a day, wherever he may be. This is to remind him that he is in a service. Twice a day in peace-time the Soldier has to appear on parade; and the more desolate and God-forsaken his station or post is, the more strict and formal ought the parade to be—for the good of his soul!

Most religions demand that the Priest shall be clean and purified by actual or ceremonial washing before he can take part in any service or sacrifice. I needn't tell you what happens to the Soldier who appears on parade in a condition which is technically called "dirty".

The textbooks say that cleanliness and neatness of clothing make for "smartness". They don't inform us what "smartness" signified originally. It meant the

absolute cleanliness and purity, so far as was possible, of the man who might himself be the sacrifice for his tribe.

Again, the good Priest is responsible not only for the proper use but for the proper care and keeping of the linen, the vestments, the vessels, the images, and the lights employed in the ritual of his religion. Every one of them must be dealt with, handled, and put away in a certain prescribed manner with certain prescribed motions, that the Priest may not at any time be led to treat them as common things. Has anyone here ever had to attend kit-inspection? Well, the earliest kit-inspection began when the earliest hunter or warrior laid out his poor little weapons, his charms, and his food-pouch on the ground in front of him, counted them, and prayed over them, for they were all he had to take him through life. I've never heard of any man praying at kit-inspection since—unless he prayed that the inspecting officer might be struck blind.

Once more, at any hour of the day or night, the good Priest must leave whatever he is doing, so long as it is not the service of his God, and go to any member of his flock who needs him, on the death-bed, or the sick-bed, in trouble of mind, family quarrel, misfortune, or weariness of spirit. So I have seen an Officer put down his drink untasted—the first in twelve hours—and go off to see that his men were properly settled in their billets and lacked nothing that his help or his authority could supply them.

Lastly, however often the Priest enters, leaves, or crosses the holy building of his faith, he must pay due acknowledgement and reverence to the altar or the shrine there. This is that he may not forget, however

busy he is, the Spirit Whom he serves. I watched an old Priest in Italy once tidying up an empty church. He knelt and crossed himself before the altar twenty-three times in half an hour as he pottered about. When the war was young, I walked once with a private soldier in London, and he told me what drove him nearly crazy was what he called the "incessant, foolish, unnecessary, snobbish" saluting. I told the young 'un what I am telling you now—that the Salute was the most important and ancient piece of symbolism invented for the deepest of spiritual reasons, many, many thousand years ago. Originally, it must have been the right hand of the armed man raised high to testify to a companion that he was there. "Behold me! I am the sacrifice." In the course of years the violent gesture has been softened down—except among children at school when they want to show that they know the answer to a question. The hand has been dropped to the level of the forehead; but you will observe that the palm of the hand is turned outwards. That is the sign of giving, not of keeping back. If the Salute were, or ever had been a sign of servility, the palm of the hand would have been turned to the inside and slightly hollowed, and the head also would have been bent forward; because that attitude is the immemorial instinctive sign of abasement, which is fear, among all the races of mankind. As it is, the gesture of the Salute is no more than the armed man indicating himself as one of the brotherhood of the sacrifice, and, curiously enough, the higher-spirited the regiment, the keener its tradition and its instinct of service, the more tense and emphatic is the motion of the indicating right hand.

Now, gentlemen, I have tried to give you the rough

outline of how Drill was born; how it developed through untold ages; and a little of what it signifies. Many of my ideas will strike you as absurd and fantastic; but, if you think them over, you will see that they are at bottom only an expansion or explanation of the first few paragraphs of Infantry training. Things are said to change in the world. To a certain extent, they do; but the changes are largely confined to making wheels turn faster and throwing weights farther than our ancestors did. The one thing that does not change, as far as we know it, is human nature. What the earliest man faced at the beginning, we have to face now. There were wonders and terrors of death, darkness, fire and lightning, frost, blood, and destruction, all about him. He faced them with such weapons as were within his knowledge, and he supplemented his weapons with what skill and craft life taught him. But behind all was his indomitable soul, the spirit of man that knows what it ought to do, even though it loathes doing it, without which he would have fallen back to be a beast among beasts again.

And, in the meantime, what has happened to the Magic Square I began to talk about? I've neglected it for a little. Before we dismiss, let's just run over its outlines again on the blackboard, and make them clearer. Here, as I said, is the Line; here is the Step and the Wheel; and here, at the bottom, the foundation of all, is Forming Fours. You see? Do you notice any other change? There isn't one, really, because, as I have said, man changes little; but it seems to me that the Magic Square has developed quite simply and naturally into the Altar of Sacrifice. Look! The letters are just the same: S.W.L.F. But the altar is based on Faith, by

which we live; it is supported by Wisdom and Strength; and it is crowned by Sacrifice, which is the highest form of Love. So you see: Faith, Wisdom, Strength, and Love—make the Altar of Sacrifice for the Man set apart to save his Tribe.

XV

THE FIRST SAILOR

Home came the ships bearing message by sulphur and smoke of the
battle.
Home came the tide to the beach and kissed the inviolate sands.

THE FIRST SAILOR

To some Junior Naval Officers of an East Coast Patrol: 1918

ADMIRALS, Vice-Admirals and Rear-Admirals of the future—I am sorry for you. When you are at sea you are exposed to the exigencies of the Service, the harsh reprimands of your superiors, the malice of the King's enemies, and the Act of God. When you come ashore you endure, as you will this evening, the assaults of the civil population teaching you your own job. For instance, my lecture deals with the origin, evolution, and development from the earliest ages, of that packet of assorted miseries which we call a Ship. With my lecture will be included a succinct but accurate history of late Able Seaman, Leading Hand *and* Commander, Clarke, founder of the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine.

The late Commander Clarke flourished between fifteen and twenty thousand years ago, on a marshy island on the south side of a tidal estuary that faced East. Barring that he did not use patent medicines, daily papers, and similar modern excrescences, he was very like yourselves, though in a different rig. His wife, Mrs. Clarke, wove baskets out of reeds, and made eel-traps out of willows and osiers.

Neither of them knew that the river in front of them would be called the Thames, or that the island they inhabited would be called Sheer Necessity. But they knew what sheer necessity meant. It was sheer neces-

sity for them to swim, spear salmon with flint-headed spears; knock seals on the head with wooden clubs; catch and trap fish; dig for cockles with a flattened piece of wood like a paddle; cure and dress skins; and, above all, keep the home-fires burning in their mud and wood hut. This was easy, because the river brought down any amount of unrationed drift-wood from the great forests in the interior of England, and laid it almost at Nobby's door. He had only to swim out, get astride of a log, and paddle it ashore with the paddle he used for digging his cockles.

But he noticed that the logs nearly always turned over with him, and tipped him into the water. He didn't mind the duckings. What annoyed him was being ducked however well he balanced himself. He did not understand logs behaving as if they were alive. You see, for aught Nobby knew, logs might be alive. According to his religion, everything else was alive. The Winds were alive. The Tides were alive. He saw them being driven up and down the river by a God who lived in the Moon. The Sun was alive too. Nobby could see the exact place where he came out of his House under the Sea. The Sun lived at the End of the World which, as everybody in his world knew, was East of Margate Sands. If the God of the Ebb Tide caught you fishing too far out from the bank of the river, he carried you out to the End of the World, and you never came back again, because you were burned up alive in the Sun's House. That was both Fact and Religion. But the logs and drift-wood used to pass out of Thames mouth with the ebb, in long processions to the End of the World; and Nobby noticed that many of those very same logs would come back again with the flood, not even charred! This

proved to him that the logs knew some sort of magic which he didn't—otherwise how could they get back from the House where the Sun rose without being burned up? That was Logic. At last he spoke about it to the High Priest of his tribe, and asked him whether a man could go and come as the logs did. The High Priest laughed and quoted an ancient saying of the Tribe when young men boasted or children wanted something they couldn't get. "Wait a bit!" he said. "As soon as the Stick marries the Basket, you'll get to the World's End and back—won't you?" That is a silly saying isn't it? It's almost as silly as the old music-hall chorus that used to be sung in London ever so long ago:

> When the Pigs begin to fly
> Oh, won't the pork be high?
> And we'll send old maids to Parliament—
> When?—
> When the Pigs begin to fly.

Now, you may have noticed, gentlemen, that the Pig, as represented by the Hun, *has* begun to fly. At the same time, the vote is being given to the ladies; whom we shall see at Westminster anon; and I need not draw the attention of any Gun-room officer to the present scandalous price of tinned sausages. This shows that, though many a prophecy turns out to be a joke, some jokes—specially in the Service—become prophecies.

So it was in Nobby's case. He didn't know what you and I know about the Doctrine of Evolution. *He* didn't know that the Stick, which the High Priest talked about, represented the single log which is the Father of all dug-out makee-paddloes, such as West African canoes, and the whole breed of rafts, praus, catamarans, and outriggers from Dakar to Malaysia;

or that the Basket is the Mother of all built-up shipping that has a keel and ribs—from the kayak, junk, and dhow, dromond, bus, caravel, carrack, and Seventy-Four, to the modern transatlantic liner, now on convoy-duty, the overworked and under-gunned sloop, the meritorious but damp destroyer and *sea-sick omnes*, throughout all the oceans. Such considerations did not weigh with him. Being a simple soul, he was merely annoyed with those logs that turned over beneath him; and he was puzzled over the logs that went to the End of the World and back again.

One day when he was retrieving his firewood as usual, he saw a log drift past that took his fancy. He swam out and straddled it, making ready to balance if it turned over. But it didn't. For the first time in the history of mankind, Nobby felt the gentle roll and recover of a ballasted keel beneath him. He leaned to port and starboard to make sure. *Still* the log didn't turn over. Why? Because it had been a small stunted tree growing on a sou'-western exposure which had bent it over to the north-east, thus giving the trunk a pleasing sheer at the bows. To steady itself against prevailing winds, the tree had wrapped its roots round a big boulder. Then a gale had torn it out of the bank it grew on, hundreds of miles up the river, and it had drifted down to the sea, rubbing and scraping on gravel and sandbars till there was hardly any trace left of its branches. But the tough old roots were still firmly wrapped round the boulder, and the log, therefore, floated more or less plumb.

As far as we can make out, the earliest steps of invention, like those of promotion, are mostly due to accident taken advantage of by the observant mind. Accident,

Providence, or Joss had presented the observant Nobby with the Mother-model, so to speak, of all the ships that would be built hereafter. But all that Nobby knew was that, at last, he had found a log which didn't roll over, and he meant to keep it. Therefore he made his wife put raw-hide lashings over the boulder among the roots so that the boulder should not drop out or shift. They greased the lashings, of course, the same way as they greased themselves with seal-oil when they went swimming, because grease keeps out wet. For the same reason they greased the whole log except along the top where they wanted to take hold of it. As they rubbed the stuff in, they scraped smooth, with shell and flint scrapers, all knots and bumps where the branches had been. Later on—it may have been weeks, it may have been months or years—it occurred to Nobby to hollow out the log so as he could sit *in* it comfortably, instead of *on* it. So he and his wife put red-hot ashes on the top, surrounded them with a little mud, and scraped away the wood as it charred. Bit by bit, they burned and scraped out as much of the inside of the log as they wanted. Nobby didn't know where the buoyancy of a boat ought to be, but he liked to stretch his legs out in the well.

Then, he and his wife went out paddling very cautiously up and down the marshes behind them, or very close to the bank of the big river. Naturally, they were afraid of the God of the Tide carrying them off to the End of the World and burning them alive in the Sun's House. All the same Nobby's eyes used to flicker sometimes towards the End of the World in the direction of Margate Sands where the Sun lived and where the logs went.

One moonlight night in April or May, B. C. fourteen thousand nine hundred odd, Nobby showed the High Priest how Mrs. Clarke had woven a sort of basket-work back-rest in and out of what was left of the roots at the stern of the log, and how he had covered it with seal-skin to keep water from slopping down his back. As a matter of fact, it was the first dim idea of a poop and sternworks that the mind of man had conceived. Nobby had made it for his own comfort—the way most inventions are made.

The High Priest looked at it. "Ah!" he said. "It strikes *me* that the Stick is beginning to marry the Basket." "In that case," said Nobby very quickly, "what about me going to the End of the World?" "Officially," said the High Priest, "I can't countenance any such action, because you would be officially burned up by the Sun when he got out of bed, and I should have to damn your soul officially afterwards. Unofficially, of course, if *I* were your age I'd have a shot at it."

I merely mention this conversation to show you that general instructions throwing the entire responsibility of the accident on the Watch Officer, while leaving the Post Captain without a stain on his character at the ensuing Court of Enquiry, were not unknown even in that remote age.

Then Nobby went home, where his wife was putting the children to bed, with a long lie about having to look after an eel-trap down the river. Mrs. Clarke said: "So the High Priest has talked you into it, has he? Let me tuck the babies up and I'll come too."

So they pushed off about midnight, paddling in the slack water. They hugged the shore all along the Colum-

bine, past Nayland Rock to Longnose Ridge—one fool-man and one devoted woman on a twenty-five-foot long log, forty-two inches extreme beam, and ten inches freeboard, bound, as they thought, for the End of the World—and back, if they weren't burned up alive by the God of the Sun *en route*. The ebb took them, at dawn, three or four miles beyond the North Foreland. There was a bit of a swell from the east, and when their log topped the long smooth ridges they saw the red-hot glare of the Sun God coming up out of his House. That panicked them! By great good luck, however, he rose two miles ahead of them. If they had paddled a little harder during the night, they would have been right on top of him. But he got up at a safe distance, and began climbing the sky as usual, and left those terrific rolling waters emptier than ever. Then they wanted to go home. They had lost the North Foreland in the morning haze; they had lost their heads; they would have lost their paddles if those hadn't been lashed. They had lost everything except the instinct that told them to keep the Sun at their backs and dig out. They dug out till they dripped—the first human beings who had ever come back from the End of the World. At last they reached Garrison Point again, white with the salt that had dried on them, their backs and shoulders aching like toothache, their eyes a foot deep in their heads, and the flesh on their bones ribbed and sodden with the wet. Can you imagine such feelings? When Nobby limped up the beach, Mrs. Nobby said: "*Now* I hope you are satisfied!"

Being a married man, Nobby told her he would never do it again. *But*, being the father of all sailormen, he was down on the beach next day, studying how to tune

up his boat for her next cruise. Never forget that, as far back as we can trace it, the mind of primitive man was much the same as yours or mine. He knew he lived under a law of cause and effect. But, since a good many of the causes of things were unknown to him, he was rather astonished at some of the effects. So was Nobby a day or two later. While they were overhauling the canoe after its desperate voyage, it occurred to them it might be a good notion to lace a covering over the well to keep the water out. First they cleared everything out of the well, and in doing so lashed the spare paddle to the left-hand side of the poop, where it hung down like a dagger with its broad blade in the water. Then they fetched out a three-cornered skin of scraped seal-gut, sewn together with sinew, which Mrs. Nobby had meant to make into slickers for family use. Nobby sat down aft, holding one corner of the skin, while Mrs. Nobby went forward to about midships, put her foot on another corner of the skin to steady it, and held the third corner up to the full stretch of her arm above her head. While they were thus measuring the triangle of shining water-tight, wind-tight stuff, all puffed out by the breeze that was blowing from their left side, the canoe began to heel and slide. Nobby grabbed the head of the spare paddle on the left side of the boat, to steady himself, and drew it towards him. The canoe ran on across the wind to the full length of her mooring-thong, and fetched up with a jerk. Now this was a reversal of every law Nobby had ever worked under, because it was axiomatic that the God of the Wind only pushed one way. If you stood on two logs lashed together, and held out your cloak with both arms, and set your feet on the lower ends of it, the God of whichever Wind was

blowing at the time, would push you straight in front of him. Nothing else was possible or conceivable. Yet here was his boat moving across the path of the sou'-west breeze! There couldn't be any mistake, because Nobby pointed it off on his fingers. He didn't know that the natural opening between the first and second fingers of a man's hand is eleven and one-quarter degrees; but he *did* know that if you pointed your first finger, holding your third and fourth fingers down with your thumb, into the eye of anything, and watched where your second finger pointed, and began again at that point with your first finger, and so on round the horizon (which was just thirty-two jabs) you could measure off the distance in finger-points between your first mark and where you were going. In this case, there were about seven of his finger-points between the Sou'-West wind's eye and the canoe's track. To make quite sure, he unmoored, carefully repeated the motions, got Mrs. Nobby to hold the skin again, pulled the head of the paddle towards him when the wind puffed; and the boat slid off for almost a quarter of a mile at right angles to the wind.

Nobby paddled back, more scared than when he had gone to the World's End, and went to see the High Priest about it. The High Priest explained like a book. He said that Nobby finding a log which didn't turn over with him; and his getting to the World's End and back on it, without being burned up by the Sun; *and* this last miracle of the Wind, coming on top of the other two, proved that Nobby was beloved by all the Gods of Tide, Sun, and Wind, *and* the Log that carried him.

"I hope that's the case," said Nobby, who was modest by nature. "But the next time I go foreign I shall hoist

that skin on a stick and have both hands free for miracles in case the Gods spring any more." Accordingly, he stuck a stick in a hole that he had burned out in the log a little forward of midships, and on the principle that you can't have too much of a good thing, he hung up another three-cornered sail in front of the first, and fastened one of its corners down to the nose of the boat. But as the free corner flapped about too much, Nobby got Mrs. Nobby to sew a thong to it, and led the thong aft to the well, so that he could stop the flapping by pulling on it. Then, the miracles began in earnest! For months and months Nobby never knew when he hoisted those two triangular skins—the first fore-and-aft sails in the world—what the log and the Gods of the Wind, and the paddle, and the strings of the sails, were going to do next. And when the God of the Tide took a hand in the circus, Nobby's hair stood on end. One day, everything would go beautifully. The God of the Tide on his lee-bow would make the old log look up almost within six finger-points of the wind; and Nobby would skim along at the rate of knots, thinking he'd found out all about it at last. Next day, with a lee-going tide, he would find the canoe bumping broadside on to every shoal he'd ever guessed at, and dozens that he hadn't. Sails, wind, tide, steering—everything—was an incomprehensible wonder, which generally ended in an upset. He had nothing but his own experience to guide him, *plus* the certainty of something happening every time that he took liberties with the Gods. And he didn't know when he *had* taken a liberty till he was tipped out of the boat. But he stuck to his job and in time he trained his eldest son to help him, till, after years and years of every sort of accident and weather,

and hard work and hard thinking and wet lying, he mastered the second of the Two Greatest Mysteries in the world—he understood the Way of a Ship on the Sea.

One fine day in autumn, with a north-west wind and good visibility, the High Priest came to him and said: "I wish you'd slip up the hill with me for a minute, and give me your opinion of the view". Nobby came at once, and when they got to Pigtail Corner, the Priest pointed to a square sail off the tail of the Mouse Shoal, some few miles away, and said: "What do you make of *that?*"

Nobby looked hard; then he said: "That's not a *ship*. It's one of those dam' barbarians from Harwich. They scull about there in any sort of coffin." The Priest said: "What are you going to do about it?"

"I'm going to have a look at him presently," said Nobby, screwing up his eyes. "Meantime, it's slack water and he's crossing the Knob Channel before the wind, because he don't know how to navigate otherwise. But in a little while, the God of the Ebb will carry him out towards the End of the World. Then he'll panic, same as I did; and he'll dig out pretty hard to close the land. But it's *my* impression the God of the Ebb Tide will defeat him, and he'll spend most of the night between the land and the World's End, paddling like a duck with the cramps. If he's lucky, he'll be brought back again by the God of the Flood Tide. But *then*, if this Nor'-West wind holds, he'll find the God of the Wind fighting the God of the Flood every foot of the way; and he'll be put to it to keep his end up in that lop. If he isn't drowned, he'll be rather fatigued. I ought to pick him up when the Sun gets out of bed to-

morrow, somewhere between Margate Sands and the End of the World—probably off the South Shingles."

"That's very interesting," said the High Priest, "but what does it mean exactly?"

"Well," said Nobby, "it means exactly that I've got to beat to windward most of this night on a lee-going tide, which, with all respect to the Gods, is the most sanguinary awkward combination *I* know; and if I don't hit mud more than a dozen times between here and the South Shingles, I shall think myself lucky. But don't let that spoil your sleep, old man."

"No, I won't," said the High Priest. "Go and keep your ceaseless vigil in your lean grey hull and—and—I'll pray for you."

Nobby didn't even say "Thank you". He went down to the beach where his eldest son was waiting with the boat.

"Bite loose the behind-end string," says Nobby, signifying in his language: "Let go the stern-fast".

"Very good, Sir," says the boy, gnashing his teeth. "Where are we going, Dad?"

"The Gods only know," says Nobby. "But *I* know that if we aren't off the South Shingles when the Sun gets out of bed to-morrow, *your* leave's stopped, for one."

By these arbitrary and unfeeling means was discipline and initiative originally inculcated in the Senior Service.

That cruise was all that Nobby had told the High Priest it would be, and a good deal more. As long as the light lasted he moved along fairly well, but after dark he was doing business alone with the Gods of the Wind and the Tide, and the sails and the strings (which nat-

urally fouled), in an unbuoyed, unlighted estuary, chockful of shoals and flats and rips and knocks and wedges and currents and overfalls; also densely populated with floating trees and logs carrying no lights, adrift at every angle. *Can* you imagine anything like it, gentlemen, in all your experience? When they had collided with their fifth floating oak, Nobby calls forward to ask his son whether he was enjoying pleasant dreams, or what else.

"But I can't *see* 'em," says the child, wiping his nose with the back of his hand.

"See 'em!" says Nobby. "Who the Hell expects you to see 'em on a night like this? You've got to *smell* 'em, my son."

Thus early, gentlemen, was the prehistoric and perishing Watch Officer inducted into the mysteries of his unpleasing trade.

So Nobby threshed along as he best could, praying to every God he knew not to set him too far to leeward when the Sun rose. And the object he was sweating his soul and carcass out for, was the one object that all his legitimate and illegitimate descendants on the seas have sweated for ever since—to get to windward of the enemy. When day broke, he found himself a couple of miles or so south-east of the South Shingles, with Margate Sands somewhere on his right, and the End of the World ahead of him glowing redder and redder as the Sun rose. He couldn't have explained how he got there, any more than he could have explained what made him lie just there, waiting for his Harwich friend, and thumping and hammering in the bubble of the wind against the tide.

In due course, the flood brought up a big ship—

fifteen foot by eight if she was an inch—made of wicker-work covered with skins. She sat low with two men trying to paddle her, and two more trying to bale. Nobby came down wind, and rammed her at the unheard-of velocity of four point two knots. She heeled over, and while the boy, who was a destructive young devil, stabbed at her skin-plating with his spear, Nobby drove his porpoise-harpoon, with line attached, in among the crew, and through her bilge. Next minute, his canoe was riding head to wind, moored by his harpoon-line to the rim of the basket flush with the water, just as the big skin square-sail floated out of her, neatly blanketing seventy-five per cent of her personnel. A minute later, the boy had hit one surviving head in the water, Nobby had cut his line, and—the first naval engagement in English history was finished, and the first English Commander was moaning over loss of stores expended in action. (Because Nobby knew he'd have to account for that harpoon and line at home.) Then he got the God of the Wind on his right side, hit land somewhere between Margate Sands and Westgate-on-Sea, and came along the shore under easy paddle to Garrison Point; the boy talking very hard and excited.

There not being any newspapers in those days, he told the High Priest exactly what he had done, and drew battle-charts in the mud with a stick, giving his courses, which were roughly North-East; then South-East; and Westerly homeward after the action.

"Well," said the High Priest, "*I* don't pretend to understand navigation, but N.E.S.E.W. means No Enemy Sails English Waters. *That's* as plain as print. It looks to me, though, as if you've started a bigger game than you've any idea of. So I understand that you

followed your enemy to the End of the World and drowned him there?"

"Yes; but that wasn't *my* fault," said Nobby. "He went there first. He hadn't any business in my water."

"Quite so," said the High Priest, "but that's only the beginning of it."

"Well," said Nobby, "what's going to be the end of it? What'll happen to *me*, for instance?"

"I'll tell you," said the High Priest, and he began to prophesy in the irritating way that civilians do. "You'll have a hard wet life and your sons after you. When you aren't being worried by the sea or your enemies, you'll be worried by your own tribe, teaching you your own job."

"*That's* nothing new," said Nobby. "Carry on!"

"You'll win the world without anyone *caring* how you did it: you'll keep the world without anyone *knowing* how you did it: and you'll carry the world on your backs without anyone *seeing* how you did it. But neither you nor your sons will get anything out of that little job except Four Gifts—one for the Sea, one for the Wind, one for the Sun, and one for the Ship that carries you."

"Well, I'm glad there will be some advantages connected with the Service. I haven't discovered 'em yet," said Nobby.

"Yes," said the Priest. "You and your sons after you will be long in the head, slow in the tongue, heavy in the hand, *and*—as you were yesterday at the World's End—always a little bit to windward. That you can count on for ever and ever and ever."

"That'll come in handy for the boy," said Nobby. "He didn't do so badly in our little affair yesterday. But what about this Stick-and-Basket pidgin you're always hinting at?"

"There's no end to what happens when the Stick marries the Basket," said the High Priest. "There will only be another beginning and a fresh start. Your logs will grow as high as hills and as long as villages, and as wide as rivers. And when they are at their highest and longest and widest, they'll all get up in the air and fly."

"That's a bad look-out for the boy," said Nobby. "I've only brought him up to the sea-trade."

"Live easy and die easy as far as that is concerned," said the High Priest. "For, winning the world, and keeping the world, and carrying the world on their backs—on land, or on sea, or in the air—your sons will always have the Four Gifts. Long-headed and slow-spoken and heavy—damned heavy—in the hand, will they be; and always and always a little bit to windward of every enemy—that they may be a safeguard to all who pass on the seas on their lawful occasions."

XVI

ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH

Beyond the Pillars of Hercules, they do things inversely and, perpetually appearing to dig their own graves, by some means erect world-beheld monuments—an example, however, not to be followed by less confident peoples.

ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH

Royal Society of St. George: April 1920

I THINK this is an occasion on which it behoves us all to walk rather circumspectly. If you will let me, I will try and tell you why. About sixteen hundred years ago, when Rome was mistress of the world and the Picts and the Scots lived on the other side of the Wall that ran from Newcastle to Carlisle, the story goes that Rome allowed all those peoples one night in the year in which they could say aloud exactly what they thought of Rome, without fear of the consequences. So then, on that one night of the year, they would creep out of the heather in droves and light their little wandering fires and criticise their Libyan Generals and their Roman Pontiffs and the Eastern camp followers, who looked down on them from the top of the great high unbreakable Roman Wall sixteen hundred years ago.

To-day, Imperial Rome is dead. The Wall is down and the Picts and the Scots are on this side of it, but thanks to our Royal Society of St. George, there still remains one night in the year when the English can creep out of their hiding-places and whisper to each other exactly what we think about ourselves. No, it is not quite safe to criticise our masters—our masters who tax us and educate us, and try us, and minister so abundantly to what they instruct us our wants ought to be. Since these masters of ours have not yet quite the old untroubled assurance of power and knowledge that made

Rome so tolerant in the days when the Picts and the Scots lived on the other side of the Wall, we will confine ourselves to our own popular and widely recognised defects.

Some of our severest critics, who, of course, are of our own household, have said that there never was such a thing as the English Race—that it is at best the intolerably insolent outcome of ancient invasions and immigrations, freshened with more recent Continental gaol-deliveries. Far be it from me to traverse such statements. I give them on no less authority than that of the late Mr. Daniel Defoe, Liveryman of the City of London, author of *Robinson Crusoe* and of a pamphlet called *The True-born Englishman.* He deals very faithfully with the English. So faithfully that, in deference to the susceptibilities of some races, I will not give his version of the Englishman's pedigree, but in his summing up of the true-born Englishman, Defoe says:

> A true-born Englishman's a contradiction,
> In speech an irony, in fact a fiction,
> A metaphor intended to express
> A man akin to all the Universe.

In that last line it seems to me that Defoe slips into a blessing where he meant to curse, because a man "akin to all the Universe" cannot be wholly lost. He must have some points of contact with humanity. And the Englishman has had several.

The Phoenicians taught him the rudiments of shopkeeping; the Romans taught him love of sport by hiring him to fight wild beasts in their arenas. Under the Heptarchy he studied Social Reform, which in those unenlightened days consisted of raising levies on capital in

order to buy off the Heathen of the North from taking direct action against English industries. He next took a three-hundred-years' course of colloquial and Law French under eminent Norman teachers. He did not learn that language then or since, but it left him with a profound respect, based on experience, for his neighbours across the Channel, and a conviction, which time has deepened, that they were the only other people in the world who mattered.

For five hundred years his affairs, domestic and foreign, were controlled by French, Italian, Spanish, with occasional Austrian, politico-ecclesiastical authorities, who tried to teach him that "this realm of England" was but part of a vast international organisation destined to embrace, protect, and instruct all mankind. He escaped from those embraces only to find himself subjected to the full rigours of the Puritan Conscience, which at that time was largely directed by gentlemen from Geneva, Leyden, Amsterdam, and the Low Countries. While thus engaged he was, under pretext of union, finally and fatally subjugated by the Scot. A few years later he embarked on the swelling tide of party politics in all their attendant purity; since which he has seldom been allowed to look back, and never forward.

I submit that such a nightmare of national experiences would have driven an unmixed race to the edge of lunacy. But the Englishman is like a built-up gun barrel, all one temper though welded of many different materials, and he has strong powers of resistance. Roman, Dane, Norman, Papist, Cromwellian, Stuart, Hollander, Hanoverian, Upper Class, Middle Class, Democracy, each in turn through a thousand years

experimented on him and tried to make him to their own liking. He met them each in turn with a large silent toleration, which each in turn mistook for native stupidity. He gave them each in turn a fair trial and, when he had finished with them, an equally fair dismissal. As an additional safeguard he devised for himself a social system in watertight compartments, so arranged that neither the waters of popular emotion nor the fires of private revenge could sweep his ship of State from end to end. If, in spite of this, the domestic situation became too much for him he could always take a ship and go to sea, and there seek or impose the peace which the Papal Legate, or the Mediaeval Trade Union, or a profligate Chancellor of the Exchequer denied to him at home. And thus, gentlemen—*not* in a fit of absence of mind—was the Empire born. It was the outcome of the relaxations of persecuted specialists—men who for one cause or another were unfit for the rough and tumble of life at home. They did it for change and rest, exactly as we used to take our summer holidays, and, like ourselves, they took their national habits with them. For example, they did not often gather together with harps and rebecks to celebrate their national glories, or to hymn their national heroes. When they did not take them both for granted, they, like ourselves, generally denied the one and did their best to impeach the other. But, by some mysterious rule-of-thumb magic, they *did* establish and maintain reasonable security and peace among simple folk in very many parts of the world, and that, too, without overmuch murder, robbery, oppression, or torture.

One secret of the success of the English was, perhaps,

their imperturbable tolerance. A race that has been persecuted, or—what comes to the same thing—bored by every persecuted refugee to whom they have ever given an asylum, naturally learns to tolerate anything. Their immensely mixed origin, too, made the English in a very real sense "akin to all the universe", and sympathetic in their dumb way with remote Gods and strange people. Above all, their long insular experience of imported brain-storms had taught them that men should not try to do better than good for fear lest worse than bad might follow. And there has been enough of worse than bad in the world for the last few years. Our national weakness for keeping to the easiest road to the latest possible minute sooner than inconvenience ourselves or our neighbours has been visited upon us full tale. After ninety-nine years of peace the English were given ninety-six hours in which to choose whether they would buy a little longer peace from the Heathen of the North, as some of their ancestors had done, or whether they would make peace with them as our King Alfred made it with the Danes. It was a race that had almost forgotten how to say "No" to anybody who said "Yes" in a sufficiently loud voice. It seemed as if it had quite forgotten that it had broken a Church, killed a King, closed a Protectorate and exiled another King, sooner than be driven where it did not want to go. But when its hour came, once again it decided to go its own way, and once again by instinct. For it had prepared nothing—it had foreseen nothing. It had been assured that not only was there no need for preparation against war, but that the mere thought of preparation against war was absurd where it was not criminal. Therefore, through the first two years of the war,

it was necessary to throw up a barricade of the dead bodies of the nation's youth behind which the most elementary preparations could be begun.

There has been no such slaughter of the English in English history, but the actual war was no more than a large-scale repetition of previous national experiences. If an Elizabethan Statesman (or adventurer) could have returned to England during the war he would, I think, in a very short time have been able to pick up his office work almost where he dropped it. His reports and his maps would have been a little more detailed, but he would have been surprisingly abreast of the whole situation.

Where the old English influence had struck deep all the world over, he would have seen help and comfort hurried up to all the fronts from all the world over without count or tale, without word or bond to limit or confirm it. Where the old alien influences that he knew so well had persisted, or where the new influences directed by the old were at work, he would have seen, as he would have expected, all help for the war denied, withheld, or doled out grudgingly, piecemeal at a high price. He would have recognised that what held firm in the days of the Armada held firm at Armageddon: that what had broken beneath his hand then was rotten in our hand now. Bar a few minor differences of equipment, he would have felt just like any sailor or soldier returning to some bitterly familiar job of sea-patrol or trench life between '14 and '18. Like those men he would have taken for granted a great deal upon which other nations might have wasted valuable thought and attention. Our stories of Coronel and Zeebrugge, of the English county battalions not one year old that died to the last

man as a matter of routine on the fronts that they were ordered to hold, would have moved him no more and no less than the little affair of Sir Richard Grenville off Flores, in the *Revenge*. That troopers of County Yeomanry in Mesopotamia, picked almost at random, could, single-handed, and by sheer force of character, control and conciliate in a few days a turbulent Arab village, would have amazed him no more and no less than any tale of Panama, or of our first venture across the world, told him by Sir Francis Drake or any forgotten captain of the same age. Being of the breed he would have known the breed and would have taken the work of the breed for granted.

And herein, as I see it, lies the strength of the English —that they have behind them this continuity of immensely varied race-experience and race-memory, running equally through all classes back to the very dawn of our dawn. This imposes on them unconsciously, even while they deny or deride it, standards of achievement and comparison, hard perhaps, and perhaps a little unsympathetic, but not low—not low—and, as all earth is witness, not easily to be lowered. And that is the reason why in the things nearest our hearts we praise so little and criticise so lavishly. It is the only compliment which an Englishman dare pay to his country.

As you know, our standards of achievement and comparison do not appear on the surface; nor are they much in men's mouths. When they are, they are mostly translated into terms of sport or the slang of our various games. But whenever the English deal in earnest with each other, or with the outside world, those standards are taken for granted. And it is by the things that we take for granted without word that we live. It was taken

for granted during the war that every day was St. George's Day, on one or other of our seven fronts.

And now, we and our kin, after these great years, are sick, dizzy, and shaken—like all convalescents, a little inclined to pity ourselves, a little inclined to stay as long as possible on a diet of invalid slops, and a little more than inclined to mistake the hysteria of convalescence for the symptoms of returning life and thought. Here also instinct tells us that the weight, the range, and the evenly spread richness of our national past should ballast us sufficiently to navigate through whatever storms—or brain-storms—there may be ahead. And we are threatened with several.

One school of thought, Muscovite in origin, holds, as the Danes held twelve hundred years ago, that rapine and scientific torture will elevate our ideals, which up to the present have merely taught us to try to do our duty to our God and our neighbour. Others are content to work for the organised bankruptcy of whatsoever is of good repute, including the systematic betrayal of our friends, very much on the same lines as some people used to panic after every Crusade and every visitation of the plague. We are further promised an unparalleled outbreak of education, guaranteed to produce a standardised State-aided mind. The Church evolved almost a parallel system in the Middle Ages, which, much to her surprise, produced the Reformation.

Lastly, lest we should ever again lapse into our "pathetic contentment", the breed which organised at a week's notice to achieve the impossible and achieved it—by earth, sea, and air achieved it—is now, as a reward, to be ruthlessly reorganised in every detail of its life, walk, and conduct. That great work was begun by

William the Conqueror, Anno Domini 1066, and has been before Committee or Commission ever since.

Norman, Papist, Cromwellian, Stuart, Hollander, Hanoverian, Upper Class, Middle Class, Democracy, have each in turn tried their fleeting hand on the "man akin to all the Universe". From each in turn he has taken what he wanted; to each in turn he has given a fair trial; and, when he has quite finished, an equally fair dismissal.

What will he do in the future? We are too near to the dust of the main battle to see clearly. We know that England is crippled by the loss and wastage of a whole generation, and that her position, from the civil point of view to-day, is the position of our armies in the darkest days of the war. That is to say, all leave is stopped for any man who can manage to stand up to his job, no matter how sick or stale he may feel himself to be, and there is undreamed-of promotion for untried men who, simply because they are not dead, will now have to face heavier responsibility, longer hours, and criticism that certainly will not grow milder as the years pass. But no miracles have occurred.

This world of ours, which some of us in their zeal to do better than good have helped to create, but which we must all inherit, is not a new world, but the old world grown harder. The wheel has come full circle. The whole weight of the world at the present moment lies again, as it used to lie in the time of our fathers, on the necks of two nations, England and France. The sole force under God's good Providence that can meet this turn of our fate, is not temperament, not opportunism, nor any effort to do better than good, but character and again character—such mere ingrained, common-

sense, hand-hammered, loyal strength of character as one humbly dares to hope that fifteen hundred years of equality of experience have given us.

If this hope be true—and because we know the breed in our hearts we know that it is true—if this hope be justified, our children's children, looking back through the luminous years to where we here stumble and falter, will say to themselves: "Was it possible—was it possible that the English of that age did not know, could not see, dared not even guess, to what height of strength, wisdom, and enduring honour they had lifted their land?"

But we will be circumspect! My lords, ladies and gentlemen—for what there is of it—for such as it is—and for what it may be worth—will you drink to England and the English?

XVII

THE SCOT AND THE WAR

These came down from the North which weighs all things in Her mind. Having struck the balance, they gave all and for ever.

THE SCOT AND THE WAR

Edinburgh University: July 1920

YOU must remember that an Englishman looks on the record of Edinburgh University, not with fear, but with envy. Your University represents sacredly and intimately the natural expression of the genius and sacrifice, the spirit and devotion of your race. But have you ever considered that these great buildings of yours, seen from the south, loom up as one of a great chain of well-devised Border fortresses and keeps of learning which, generation after generation, have trained and equipped the Scot for his conquest of the world in almost every detail of the world's development and administration? Many excuses for these overwhelming facts have been put forward by the overwhelmed. One has heard it argued that a race born among granite boulders and compelled, at an early age, to seek their sustenance from under the snow would naturally find any condition of life elsewhere subtropically luxurious. It is true, too, that surroundings which enforce a certain wise thrift do save a man from wasting his soul on barren emotions in spiritual matters, as well as from lending himself to the grosser cruelties of collective sentimentalism.

A stranger, speaking with due deference, might be forgiven for thinking that, though the liberality of your citizens made and adorned your University, none the less, the driving force behind this three-hundred-year-

old dominion of the Scot derives in essence from the strict and unbreakable spirit of that great educationist John Knox, who, whatever he may have said about the monstrous regiment of women, neither flattered nor feared any flesh. It was John Knox who, at lifelong hazard, laid down and maintained the canon that it should be lawful for men so to use themselves in matters of religion and conscience as they should answer to their Maker. Is it too much to say that, after all these years, on these triple foundations of freedom, authority, and responsibility, the moral fabric of your University was reared? Nor did it fail when the bitter and grinding dispensation of the Great War overtook us.

Here, as elsewhere, the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children. The sons of your University were constrained, like their forbears, so to use themselves in matters of conscience as they should answer to their Maker. All earth has witnessed that they answered as befitted their ancestry; that they endured as the strong influences about their youth had taught them to endure. They willingly and wittingly left the purpose of their lives unachieved in order that all life should not be wrenched from its purpose; and without fear they turned from these gates of learning to those of the grave. This is their glory and also that of their severe but beloved Mother who, while she gave them learning, dowered them also with that Wisdom lacking which all Learning is folly.

XVIII

THE VIRTUE OF FRANCE

Closer than kinship it is to have loved and suffered together.
Ships on a doubled chain ride to the heaviest gale.

THE VIRTUE OF FRANCE

Sorbonne, Paris: November 1921

I ASK your forgiveness if I speak in English to acknowledge the very great and signal honour you have bestowed upon me, an Englishman.

Your Rector has delivered a eulogium of my work which would demand more than all that quality of imagination he attributes to me, could I convince myself that the half of it were deserved. But far be it from me to qualify any ruling of the Sorbonne, *domus magistrorum pauperrima*. So I will not confess (what must be evident to my literary confrères here) how much in my art I have learned and applied both consciously and unconsciously from the masters of that art in your country. It is an influence to which I was submitted almost from my childhood when, as a boy of twelve, I first made acquaintance with a France that was renewing herself after the Franco-Prussian War. It was an influence that strengthened itself again and again in my youth and through my manhood, as one saw and, at last, began to comprehend a little, what the genius and the existence of France signified in a world that moved without fear, since it was without knowledge, towards the catastrophe predicted by the unregarded prophets of '70.

And when that catastrophe arrived, mankind beheld with what passion of virtue and faith in her women and men France moved to confront it; with what

endurance she supported—with what hardihood she overcame—her triple burden of butchery, torture, and devastation; and with what ingrained sanity she set herself to repair her inconceivable losses with almost inconceivable labour.

These are not qualities born full-grown in any nation, nor produced by sudden pressure of necessity, however terrible. Their genesis lies in the national past. They are built up through multiplied experiences and agonies. They are tempered alike in the fires of war and the little daily fires of a million small hearths. They are reflected, also, step by step, through the generations, in the literature of the land whose instincts have developed them and whose sure defences they are.

It is for that reason, Masters, Doctors, my brothers, that I thank you, very humbly but very proudly, that you should have associated my name even for my moment, with the august succession of frank, joyous, and wise writers who, ever since the Sorbonne introduced here the art of printing, have revealed and glorified the undefeated soul of your race.

XIX

A THESIS

By the tales told at their mother's knee do men live or die. Praise the Gods, Mother, that you told me tales of the open-breasted Gods, and not of vermin!

A THESIS

Sorbonne Banquet: November 1921

WILL you permit me to speak in my dual capacity as a Doctor of your University and as a mere teller of stories? I cannot maintain arguments for the space of six weeks against all the learned Regents of the Sorbonne, as did the illustrious Pantagruel; but I venture to submit for your consideration this *thèse Sorbonnique:* That the nations of the world betray their essential characteristics and ideals more intimately and more precisely in the folk-tales which they tell to their children, than through any other medium. In public assemblies, man makes use of the lie proper to the occasion; but beside his own hearth, among his own family, he reveals unconsciously the absolute truth concerning all that he desires or fears. The folk-tales of a race never lie.

Now the ancient and immemorial fairy-tales of France and of England are of a charming simplicity. There is always a young man who goes out into the world to seek his fortune. On the road he is kind to a beggar, an old woman, or, perhaps a cat. This, though he knows it not, is a good investment. Very soon, he falls into the hands of giants or sorcerers. He is cast into prison, or compelled to perform impossible tasks. At that moment, the beggar, the old woman, or the cat whom he had befriended, comes to his rescue, tells him

the magic word that opens the prison door and achieves the impossible task; or gives him the magic sword which destroys the giants at one blow. In consequence, the youth possesses himself of all their treasure and, equally, he marries a Princess—that Princess which exists always in the dreams of youth. He becomes the Head of a Kingdom, and, in due course, the head of a family.

You perceive, do you not, that our national fairy-tales reflect the inmost desires of the Briton and the Gaul? Thus:—

There was a young man, who through lucky investments, became a wealthy *rentier*, consolidated his social position by a desirable alliance, and founded a family. You may say that the ideal is bourgeois, but on the pursuit of that ideal, as our youth has pursued it eternally, is based an enormous proportion of the progress and the continuity of our civilisation. Therefore, in France and in England, which together compose the twin fortresses of European civilisation of to-day, our folk-tales prefigure our racial temperaments.

Every race betrays itself thus in the tales it tells to its own children. Let us examine elsewhere. From the earliest ages comes down to us from out of the North, inhabited by the tribes of the Teuton and the Tartar, a mass of legend and story, almost a literature in itself, which deals with the Wehr-Wolf—the beast that can at pleasure or for profit change itself into the likeness of a man and for pleasure or profit become again the Wolf. In these tales, a villager meets a traveller who asks him the way; a family sitting round their hearth by night hear at the door a woman seeking shelter from the storm. The traveller is guided, the woman is admitted into the house. Confidence is established. The traveller

rests and works in the village; the woman, perhaps, marries there and bears children; but in time—in due time—these creatures out of the darkness and the night of the North, practise, furtively or openly, the rituals and *sabbats* of the pack to which they belong. There are mysterious attacks on men, women, and little children in the village. For a while no suspicion is aroused. Men do not suspect men of the outrages of beasts. Then arrives, by chance, the sudden discovery of the Wehr-Wolf in its proper shape, its fangs in the victim's throat. It runs off through the forest and the snow, wounded, howling, but looking over its shoulder. The village resumes its life. In due time the cycle of treachery and terror is repeated in that village. The traveller reappears more abject, and the woman more in need of help than before. They are received by human beings as human beings. They wait their time; they kill and again depart. You in France have reason to know these stories.

I confess that when I first read them I was fascinated by the old tenacity and the ruthlessness of the Wehr-Wolves, as much as I despised the stupidity of their victims. For in those days I believed, with the rest of the world, that such tales came out of the twilight of primitive savagery. I did not know then, as you and I know now, that they were the dawn and the forecast of a modern philosophy of Absolute Evil which has since been made plain in the face of all mankind. I did not think then, as I think now, that if our leaders had accepted the folk-tales in their children's story-books for a guide our world, to-day desolated, would have prepared against the Wolves before they came down from the North, and would have made sure also that the cycle of

suspense, treachery, and terror would never repeat itself.

To-day, we have not that security. You in France are exposed still to the direct ravages of the wolves who are men. We in England, to the indirect, but therefore more dangerous, attacks of the men who are wolves. Both our nations know this in our hearts because both have suffered, but this knowledge is not yet the basis of our common actions. Why?

I am, by your grace, a Doctor of Letters; but were I a Doctor of Medicine, I would venture the theory that the very continuance and pressure of the agony through which mankind is passing, has driven many minds to create and invent, as a relief to their nerves, grandiose, meticulously regulated, but none the less nebulous, organisations, and ceremonials of Utopian administrations in the sincere belief that by virtue of the intensity of thought bestowed upon them, these fantasies will achieve the peace which the world still seeks. It is a state of mind which, in my calling, produces what is known as the Literature of Escape—that is to say, when an artist, recoiling from the harsh face of life as it is takes refuge in depicting a life that never was.

But I hold that, precisely as this mood passes from the individual so also will it pass away from the nations. In England at the present moment situations and opinions are controlled by those who not having foreseen war are perhaps the less capable to complete peace. But behind them are the men who stand upon the threshold of the councils of the nation; whose education to that end commenced seven years ago by the side of your own sons. These men desire for the future, above all, that elementary justice and reasoned safety against

the wolves from the North for which they gave themselves in the past on the field of battle. Remember the association there of France and of England was no easy and unbroken progress towards overwhelming triumph. Such dreams exist only in the minds of races who have always exploited but never begotten a civilisation. With us it was otherwise. There was no anxiety, no humiliation, no compromise, no defeat, no catastrophe, and no splendour of recovery which the sons of France and England did not experience together from the first to the last days of the Gehenna through which they came.

And in that mutual realisation of the best and the worst, that sacred brotherhood of common life, shared by all the manhood of each race lies our strength for the future—a strength which neither our own weakness nor the devices of the enemy to work upon our weaknesses can ultimately shake.

For the present, France and England are still wandering in the confusion of the No Man's Land that lies between the old world and the new. The Commands there are still sending out patrols in all directions which naturally impede each other. The very ground, on which we meet for our conference, is cicatrised with old trenches and sown with the traps and mines left by the enemy. But have patience. Though it be a heavier burden even than war—have patience!

For thirty generations, France and England in secular but fruitful conflict have engendered and sustained a civilisation which has been attacked by an immense and highly organised barbarism. It is threatened now not only by a recrudescence of that barbarism, impenitent and energetic as ever, but by the world-weakening reaction that has overtaken us after our prodigious battle.

For that we, who know each other, must make allowance. One cannot resume a broken world as easily as one can resume a broken sentence. But before long, our sons who have spent themselves in suffering and toiling to abolish the menace of barbarism, will recover also from the menace of moral lassitude; and will re-establish together the foundations of the peace of the world, not on pious dreams or amiable hopes, but on those ancient virtues of logic, sanity and laboriousness with which her history and her own indomitable genius have dowered France.

XX

A RETURN TO CIVILISATION

Write on this gate delivered from her tearful yoke by those who have clothed themselves in the dark dust, that, now, within her, men may question and speak of all things everywhere.

A RETURN TO CIVILISATION

Strasbourg University: November 1921

I PRAY your patience and forbearance, Masters and Doctors, if I acknowledge in my own tongue the high honour you have bestowed upon me. But you will observe that I do not *ask* your permission to do this. That is because at the free University of Strasbourg there is now no tongue forbidden to any man within the confraternity of civilised nations. In this you have returned to the custom, momentarily interrupted, of your long and illustrious past. The price paid for this resumption was not small; but it is one in which all the civilised world has shared.

Upon you of this University has been imposed additionally the burden of an oppression, willed and designed in the past, of which the object was, first to enslave, that later it might brutalise, the most sacred springs and sources of man's intellect. It was a burden of peculiar atrocity, since its external manifestations were camouflaged beneath the apparatus and the verbiage of an elaborated civilisation. All that was lacking to the perfection of its perversion was any understanding of men's minds—any comprehension of man's soul. Therefore, the intolerable thing perished, after a time, short, indeed, as the lives of nations are reckoned, but which, to those who suffered and whose sons suffered under it, was a veritable eternity.

That night has passed, but the memory of it remains

in your mind; as the knowledge of it remains in the minds of all men who are concerned that, henceforward, communication between man and fellow-man shall be open, direct and uncoerced.

It is that knowledge which makes doubly precious the gifts you chose to bestow, since one receives them, as I do mine to-night, not merely from an ancient and world-renowned citadel of learning, but directly from the hands of those men who suffered and endured in its defence.

XXI

THE TREES AND THE WALL

These men were at first strangers to us till we found that the Sword, robbing our parents, gave us many brothers.

THE TREES AND THE WALL

University Banquet, Strasbourg: November 1921

IN THANKING you for the warmth and good-will of your welcome to-night, I would point out that this is not even the second time that I have set foot in Alsace. The first was when I visited Thann in the autumn of '15. But then, for reasons now happily removed, it was difficult for me to advance more than half way up the main street of that beautiful town. The second occasion was when I came through Alsace, for too short a time, in April of this present year, and saw the first crops pushing through in the superbly cultivated fields.

I have been told recently, what I learned long ago from the books of your Erckmann-Chatrian, that it is his devotion to his native soil which he cultivates which gives the Alsatian his historical hardihood and independence of character. That may well be. The soil is the best and wisest of teachers. But we know also that when a people, free by instinct and origin, have been forced to act and suffer for their liberty as Alsace has been forced, their character is developed exactly as the strength and quality of a forest is developed by the very storms that seek to remove it.

Remember what your Jaures says about a certain forest. "You may build a wall through the heart of the forest if you please; but the roots of the trees will touch each other beneath it. The branches of the trees will

meet and join overhead. The forest has only one soul."

Alsace is that Forest, and that Wall, as we know, was built very cleverly and very strongly by a people whose ambition was, and is, to build a wall around all mankind. But the slow, irresistible strength of the trees undermined and upheaved it. The Forest defeated the Wall yet again, and for ever.

It is so with all forests. It is so with all races. Listen a little while I speak to you of my own race, for there are foolish people who would try to build a wall between France and England.

Your attachment to your land is because you have lived in it and suffered for it, as your fathers did before you. Your dead of your old wars are scattered all along its frontiers. They lie in all parts of France, and beyond. Have you forgotten where they lie? Wissembourg, Reichshoffen, Gravelotte, St. Privat? The mere names of their resting-places are to you part of your national, your individual life and history and pride. Come with me now to the west of your great country—to those giant bastions of our war that stretch, one after the other from Calais to Rheims. We English have left there, a larger army than Napoleon led into Russia—four hundred thousand of the bodies of our own sons, beside a multitude of whom no trace remains. They died with your sons. Have we forgotten where they died? Ask any man or woman in any English street or field. They will give you at once the name of some little demolished French village of which, perhaps, even you have never heard. They will tell you the very turn of the road to it, the very hedge beside the orchard where their man fell. They will tell you too of the hundreds of kindly, patient French villages behind the lines where

your people were so good to our people, not for a little time, but devotedly and continuously, through all those terrible years when yours and ours suffered and toiled together. And more than that! Every square kilometre, indeed almost every square metre, of that France which we know so well, is to us, nationally and individually, a background lit with every human passion; represents to us some intense and burning focus of effort in the days when the English and French came to know the very fibre of each other's souls.

Do we forget those experiences of the living—those memories of the dead? They have been burned into us for ever. So, you see, that living and dead, it must always be the same between our peoples. Our roots meet beneath the soil. Our branches join and touch each other overhead. The forest has only one soul.

All we have to do is to guard against the people who would try to build a wall across the heart of our forest. We must look to it that they do not find even the chance to make a preliminary reconnaissance for this work. They are very clever. They are utterly without scruple, since it is vital to their attack upon our civilisation that that wall should be made. And they will try to commence it in the name of Civilisation!

XXII

WAKING FROM DREAMS

Truly the Gods oppress us damnably. Yoke up the Oxen!
Fields well furrowed we need now and not furrows of tears.

WAKING FROM DREAMS

Strasbourg: November 1921

I FIND it difficult to thank you for the welcome that you have given me here, or for the kindness with which you have spoken of the very little that I have been fortunate enough to accomplish towards the ends which we have at heart.

We here all know that the ends of France and of England are in essence the same; even as our physical and intellectual frontiers against our enemies should be the same, not only for a term of years but as far as human prevision can extend. Our differences, serious as they may appear in our newspapers, are political and passing. Our necessities are immutable and identical; and on our unity henceforward depends the individual future of each country. And that, believe me, is being realised in England to-day. Wherever one looks or listens one feels this.

During the years that have passed since the war, we in England have dreamed many dreams—some good—some bad—many stupid. And a large part of the world has dreamed with us. Now we are waking. It may be that in England we sleep more heavily than you in France. Perhaps that is the effect of the climate; but in England also we are waking, and we find, after three years, that the mass of our people desires what the mass of the people has always desired—Security.

That is natural, because after one has dreamed one

returns to the life of this world. With us it is even more natural because we have found out what this lack of security has already cost us in every relation of our national, imperial, and individual life. And this knowledge has been forced upon us by the instinctive logic of a multitude of simple people who frankly do not understand the fantasies which are offered to them in lieu of that security which they were promised as the just wage of their efforts during the war.

So it may be that we are arriving at a new orientation of men's minds—none the less potent that it is, for the moment, inarticulate—as inarticulate as was the grief of these simple people for the loss of their sons who lie beside yours in French soil. But this new orientation, this awakening from dreams, is exerting and will, in the future, more and more exert, pressure on the side of reason and sanity, which as men know through all ages, make for security. And in that pressure, direct, human, elementary, towards a recognition of the facts of this life, I, a loyal lover of France, beg you always to believe and to trust.

XXIII

SURGEONS AND THE SOUL

I, an unknown man, was eaten out of life by an incurable disease sent, it was said, from the Gods. Have a care, You Above! My breed also is immortal and, presently, some of them will be after You with knives to discover if this was true.

SURGEONS AND THE SOUL

Annual Dinner, Royal College of Surgeons: February 1923

IN THE memorable Hunterian oration to which we have listened this afternoon, Sir John Bland-Sutton touched on that noble verse in Ecclesiasticus: "Honour the Physician with the honour which is due to him for the uses which ye may have of him". There is an alternative reading, which runs, "Honour a Physician before thou hast need of him". It is also seemly to honour him after that event. And I have—not another justification, but an excuse, for speaking in such an assembly as this. I am, by calling, a dealer in words; and words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind. Not only do words infect, ergotise, narcotise, and paralyse, but they enter into and colour the minutest cells of the brain, very much as madder mixed with a stag's food at the Zoo colours the growth of the animal's antlers. Moreover, in the case of the human animal, that acquired tint, or taint, is transmissible. May I give you an instance? There is a legend which has been transmitted to us from the remotest ages. It has entered into many brains and coloured not a few creeds. It is this: Once upon a time, or rather, at the very birth of Time, when the Gods were so new that they had no names, and Man was still damp from the clay of the pit whence he had been digged, Man claimed that he, too, was in some sort a deity. The Gods were as just in those days as they are now. They weighed his evidence

and decided that Man's claim was good—that he was, in effect, a divinity, and, as such, entitled to be freed from the trammels of mere brute instinct, and to enjoy the consequence of his own acts. But the Gods sell everything at a price. Having conceded Man's claim, the legend goes that they came by stealth and stole away this godhead, with intent to hide it where Man should never find it again. But that was none so easy. If they hid it anywhere on Earth, the Gods foresaw that Man, the inveterate hunter—the father, you might say, of all hunters—would leave no stone unturned nor wave unplumbed till he had recovered it. If they concealed it among themselves, they feared that Man might in the end batter his way up even to the skies. And, while they were all thus at a stand, the wisest of the Gods, who afterwards became the God Brahm, said, "*I* know. Give it to me!" And he closed his hand upon the tiny unstable light of Man's stolen godhead, and when that great Hand opened again, the light was gone. "All is well," said Brahm. "I have hidden it where Man will never dream of looking for it. I have hidden it inside Man himself." "Yes, but whereabouts inside Man have you hidden it?" all the other Gods asked. "Ah," said Brahm, "that is my secret, and always will be; unless and until Man discovers it for himself."

Thus, then, gentlemen, does the case stand with Man up to the present. Consider, for a moment, the pathos of the poor brute's position! You all know the common formula for him. "Born of Woman, on Woman designed to beget his like—the natural quarry of the Seven Deadly Sins, *but* the Altar of an inextinguishable Hope." Or, more scientifically (I regret I am not a scientific person), he might be defined as "An imperfectly denatured

animal intermittently subject to the unpredictable reactions of an unlocated spiritual area."

And it is just this search for this unlocated spiritual area, whether it be a growth or a survival, which has preoccupied Man from that day to this. The Priest and the Lawgiver have probed and fished for it all through the ages; but, more than any other, through all the ages, the Leech, the Medicine-Man, the Healer, has been hottest on its track. He has searched wherever he dared—openly or furtively—in safety or at the risk of his life. In the early days the Astrologer-Physician, as he called himself, dreamed that the secret of Man's eternal unrest was laid up in the sun, moon, and stars; and consequently, since all created things were one in essence, that an universal medicament for Man's eternal woes could be discovered upon earth. So he searched the earth and the heavens for those twin secrets, and sacrificed himself in the search as a matter of course. Later, when the embargoes on the healing art were lifted,—when, at last, he was permitted to look openly into the bodies of mankind—the nature of his dreams changed for a while. He had found more wonders beneath his knife than earth or the planets had theretofore shown him. And that was barely ten generations ago. Once again, the Surgeon, as he had become, renewed his search, and once again sacrificed himself in the search as his passion drove him. There is no anaesthesia so complete as man's absorption in his own job.

In the teeth of the outrageous, the absurd disabilities imposed on him, Man—the imperfectly denatured animal, who cannot trust the evidence of his own senses in the simplest matter of fact; whose evidence on the simplest matter is coloured by his own iniquities—

Man, always the hunter, went up against the darkness that cloaked him and every act of his being, to find out what order of created being he might be. He called it scientific research. It was the old quest under a new name. But, this time, the seekers who headed it, unlike the Priest and the Lawyer, admitted that they knew very little. Experience had taught them to be humble. For that reason their knowledge was increased. They moved forward into areas of the body, which, till then, had denied themselves to man's hand. They were turned back, without explanation, from other areas which, as yet, would tolerate no spying. They were bewildered by mysteries which some new marriage of observation upon accident, some predestined slip of the knife resolved into—mysteries profounder still! Is it any wonder that the old dreams came back? The dream of the essential unity of all created things—the dream that some day that which men called Life might be led into matter which men called dead—the boldest dream of all, that eventually Man might surprise the ultimate secret of his being where Brahm had hidden it, in the body of Man. And, meanwhile, their days were filled, as yours are filled, with the piteous procession of men and women begging them, as men and women beg of you daily, for leave to be allowed to live a little longer, upon whatever terms.

Is it any wonder, gentlemen of the College of Surgeons, that your calling should exact the utmost that man can give—full knowledge, exquisite judgement, and skill in the highest, to be put forth, not at any self-chosen moment, but daily at the need of others? More than this. Your dread art demands that instant, impersonal vision which in one breath, one beat of the pulse,

can automatically dismiss every preconceived idea and impression, and as automatically recognise, accept, and overcome whatever of new and unsuspected menace may have slid into the light beneath your steadfast hands.

But such virtue is not reached or maintained except by a life's labour, a life's single-minded devotion. Its reward is not only the knowledge of mastery and the gratitude of the layman, which may or may not bring content. Its true reward is the dearly prized, because unpurchasable, acknowledgement of one's fellow-craftsmen.

I have the honour to-night of speaking before you, who are Masters in your craft. I do not give you the name of the least in your long line of seekers who follow the quest Brahm set them, when I ask you to drink the health of Sir John Bland-Sutton, a Master among Masters.

XXIV

"INDEPENDENCE"

First, above all, Philodemus filled his own platter and his own cup at his own charges, so that no man could expect to get from him more than his mere life. Thus he contrived at times to live with himself—a guest not always placable.

"INDEPENDENCE"

Rectorial Address, St. Andrews University: October 1923

THE sole revenge that maturity can take upon youth for the sin of being young is to preach at it. When I was young I sat and suffered under that dispensation. Now that I am older I propose, if you, my constituents, will permit me, to hand on the sacred torch of boredom.

In the First Volume, then, of the Pickering Edition of the works of the late Robert Burns, on the 171st page, you will find this stanza:

> To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile
> Assiduous wait upon her,
> And gather gold by every wile
> That's justified by honour—
> Not for to hide it in a hedge
> Nor for the train attendant,
> But for the glorious privilege
> Of being independent.

At first sight it may seem superfluous to speak of thrift and independence to men of your race, and in a University that produced Duncan of Ruthwell, and Chalmers. I admit it. No man carries coals to Newcastle—to sell. But if he wishes to discuss coal in the abstract, as the Deacon of Dumfries discussed love, he will find Newcastle knows something about it. And so, too, with you here. May I take it that you, for the most part, come, as I did, from households conversant with a

certain strictness—let us call it a decent and wary economy—in domestic matters, which has taught us to look at both sides of the family shilling—that we belong to stock where present sacrifice for future ends (our own education may have been among them) was accepted, in principle and practice, as part of life? I ask this because talking to people who for any cause have been denied these experiences is like trying to tell a neutral of our life between 1914 and 1918.

Independence means, "Let every herring hang by its own head". It signifies the blessed state of hanging on to as few persons and things as possible, and it leads up to the singular privilege of a man owning himself. The desire for independence has been, up to the present, an ineradicable human instinct, antedating even the social instinct. Let us trace it back to its beginning, so that we may not be surprised at our own virtue to-day.

Science tells us that man did not begin life on the ground, but lived first among treetops—a platform which does not offer much room for large or democratic assemblies. Here he had to keep his individual balance on the branches, under penalty of death or disablement if he lost it, and here, when his few wants were satisfied, he had time to realise slowly that he was not altogether like the beasts, but a person apart, and, therefore, lonely. Not till he abandoned his family tree and associated himself with his fellows on the flat, for predatory or homicidal purposes, did he sacrifice his personal independence of action or cut into his large leisure of brooding abstraction necessary for the discovery of his relations to his world. This is the period in our Reverend Ancestor's progress through Time that strikes me as immensely the most interesting and important.

No one knows how long it took to divide the human line of ascent from that of the larger apes; but during that cleavage there may have been an epoch when Man lay under the affliction of something very like human thought before he could have reached the relief of speech. It is, indeed, conceivable that in that long inarticulate agony he may have traversed—dumb—the full round of personal experience and emotion. And when, at last, speech was born, what was the first practical use Man made of it? Remember, he was, by that time, past-master in all arts of camouflage known to the beasts. He could hide near a waterhole and catch them as they came down to drink—which is the germ of war. He could attract them by imitating their cries of distress or love—which is the genesis of most of the arts. He could double back on his tracks and thus circumvent an acquaintance of his own kind who was stalking him—which is obviously the origin of most of our social amenities. In short, he could *act* any kind of lie then extant. I submit, therefore, that the first use Man made of his new power of expression was to *tell* a lie—a frigid and calculated lie.

Imagine the wonder and delight of the First Liar in the World when he found that the first lie overwhelmingly outdid every effort of his old mud-and-grass camouflages and with no expenditure of energy! Conceive his pride, his awestricken admiration of himself, when he saw that, by mere word of mouth, he could send his simpler companions shinning up trees in search of fruit that he knew was not there; and when they descended, empty and angry, he could persuade them that they, and not he, were in fault, and could dispatch them hopefully up another tree. Can you blame the

Creature for thinking himself a god? The only thing that kept him within bounds must have been the discovery that this miracle-working was not confined to himself.

Unfortunately—most unfortunately—we have no record of the meeting of the World's First Liar with the World's Second Liar, but from what we know of their descendants to-day, they were probably of opposite sexes, married at once, and begat a numerous progeny. For there is no doubt that Mankind suffered much and early from this same vice of lying. One sees that in the enormous value attached by the most primitive civilisations to the practice of telling the Truth; and the extravagant praise awarded—mostly after death—to individuals notorious for the practice. Now the amount of Truth open to Mankind has always been limited. Substantially, it comes to no more than the axiom quoted by the Fool in "Twelfth Night," on the authority of the witty Hermit of Prague: "That that is, is". Conversely, "That that is not, isn't". But it is just this Truth that Man most bitterly resents being brought to his notice. He will do, suffer, and permit anything rather than acknowledge it. He desires that the waters which he has digged and canalised should run up hill by themselves when it suits him. He desires that the numerals which he has himself counted on his fingers and christened "two and two" should make three and five according to his varying needs or moods. Why does he want this? Because subconsciously, he still scales himself against his age-old companions, the beasts, who can only act lies. Man knows that, at any moment, he can tell a lie, that, for a while, will delay or divert the workings of cause and effect. Being an animal who is

still learning to reason, he does not yet understand why, with a little more, or a little louder, lying, he should not be able permanently to break the chain of that law of cause and effect—the justice without the mercy—which he hates, and to have everything both ways in every relation of his life. In other words, we want to be independent of facts; and the younger we are the more intolerant we are of those who tell us that this is impossible.

When I wished to claim my independence and to express myself according to the latest lights of my age (for there were lights even then), it was disheartening to be told that I could not expect to be clothed, fed, taught, amused, and comforted—not to say preached at—by others, and at the same time to practise towards them a savage and thorny independence. I imagine that you, perhaps, may have assisted at domestic conferences on these lines; but I maintain that we are not the unthinking asses that our elders called us. Our self-expression may have been a trifle crude, but the instinct that prompted it was that primal instinct of independence which antedates the social one and makes the young at times a little difficult. It comes down from the dumb and dreadful epoch when all that Man knew was that he was himself, and not another, and therefore the loneliest of created beings; and *you* know that there is no loneliness to equal the loneliness of youth at war with its surroundings in a world that does not care. I can give you no great comfort in your war, but if you will allow me, I will give you a scientific parallel that may bear on the situation.

Not once upon a time, but at many different times in different places and ages, it came over some one Primi-

tive Man that he desired above everything to escape for a while from the sight and sound and the smell of his Tribe. It may have been an excellent Tribe, or it may have been an abominable one, but whichever it was he had had enough of it for a time. Knowing no more than the psychology of his age (whereas we, of course, know the psychology of all the ages), he referred his impulse to the direct orders, guidance, or leading of his Totem, his Guardian Spirit, his Disembodied Ancestor, or other Private God, who had appeared to him in a dream and inspired his action. Herein, our ancestor was as logical as a man taking his degree on the eve of a professional career—not to say as a practical Scot. He accepted Spirits and manifestations of all kinds as part of his highly organised life, which had its roots in the immemorial past; but, outside that, the amount of truth open to him was limited. He only knew that if he did not provide himself with rations in advance for his proposed excursion away from the Tribe, he would surely starve.

Consequently, he took some pains, and practised a certain amount of self-denial, to get and prepare these rations. He may have wished to go forth on some utterly useless diversion, such as hacking down a tree or piling up stones, but whatever his object was, he intended to undertake it without the advice, interference, or even the privity of his Tribe. He might appreciate the dear creatures much better on his return. He might hatch out wonderful schemes for their advantage during his absence. But that would be a side-issue. The power that possessed him was a desire to own himself for a while, even as his ancestors, whose spirits had, he believed, laid this upon him, had owned themselves before the

Tribal idea had been evolved. Morally his action was unassailable; his personal God had dictated it. Materially, his justification for his departure from the normal was the greasy, inconspicuous packet of iron rations on his shoulder, the trouble he had taken to get them, and the extent to which he was prepared not to break into them except as a last resort. For without that material, backed by those purposes, his visions of his Totem, Spirit, or God would have melted back into the ruck of unstable, unfulfilled dreams, and his own weariness of his Tribe would have returned upon himself in barrenness of mind and bitterness of soul. Because, if a man has *not* his rations in advance, for any excursion of any kind that he proposes to himself, he must stay with his Tribe. He may swear at it aloud or under his breath. He may tell himself and his friends what splendid things he would do were he his own master, but as his Tribe goes, so must he go—for his belly's sake. When and as it lies, so must he lie. Its people must be his people and its God must be his God. Some men may accept this dispensation; some may question it. It is to the latter that I would speak.

Remember always that, except for the appliances we make, the rates at which we move ourselves and our possessions through space, and the words which we use, nothing in life changes. The utmost any generation can do is to rebaptise each spiritual or emotional rebirth in its own tongue. Then it goes to its grave hot and bothered, because no new birth has been vouchsafed for its salvation, or even its relief. And your generation succeeds to an unpromising and dishevelled heritage. In addition to your own sins, which will be numerous but quite normal, you have to carry the extra handicap

of the sins of your fathers. This, it is possible that many of you have already made clear to your immediate circle. But the point you probably omitted (as our generation did when we used to deliver our magnificent, unpublished orations *De Juventute*) is, that no shortcomings on the part of others can save us from the consequences of our own shortcomings.

It is also true that you were brought into this world without being consulted. But even this disability, from which, by the way, Adam suffered, though it may justify our adopting a critical attitude towards First Causes, will not, in the long run, nourish our physical or mental needs. There seems to be an unscientific objection on the part of First Cause against being inquired of. For you who follow on the heels of the Great War are affected, as you are bound to be, by a demoralisation not unlike that which overtakes a household where there has been long and severe illness followed by a relaxation of domestic ritual and accompanied by loud self-pity and large recrimination. Nor is this all your load. The past few years have so immensely quickened and emphasised all means of communication, visible and invisible, in every direction, that our world—which is only another name for the Tribe—is not merely "too much with us", but moves, shouts, and moralises about our path and our bed through every hour of our days and nights. Even a normal world might become confusing on these terms, and ours is far from being normal. One-sixth of its area has passed bodily out of civilisation; and much of the remainder appears to be divided, with no consciousness of sin, between an earnest intention to make Earth Hell as soon as possible, and an equally earnest intention, with no consciousness of

presumption, to make it Heaven on or before the same date. But you will have ample opportunities of observing this for yourselves.

The broad and immediate result—partly through a recent necessity for thinking and acting in large masses, partly through the instinct of mankind to draw together and cry out when calamity hits them, and very largely through the quickening of communications—is that the power of the Tribe over the individual has become more extended, particular, pontifical, and, using the word in both senses, impertinent, than it has been for many generations. Some men accept this omnipresence of crowds; some may resent it. It is to the latter that I am speaking.

The independence that was a "glorious privilege" in Robert Burns's day is now more difficult to achieve than when one had merely to overcome a few material obstacles and the rest followed almost automatically. Nowadays, to own oneself in any decent measure, one has to run counter to a gospel, and to fight against its atmosphere; and an atmosphere, so long as it can be kept up, is rather cloying. Even so, there is no need for the individual who intends to own himself to be too pessimistic. Let us, as our forefathers used, count our blessings. You, my constituents, enjoy three special ones. First, thanks to the continuity of self-denial on the part of your own forbears, the bulk of you will enter professions and callings in which you will be free men—free to be paid what your work is worth in the open market, irrespective of your alleged merits or your needs. Free, moreover, to work without physical molestation of yourself or your family as long and as closely as you please; free to exploit your own powers and

your own health to the uttermost for your own ends.

Your second blessing is that you carry in your land's history and in your hearts the strongest instinct of inherited continuity, which expresses itself in your passionate interest in your own folk, your own race, and all its values. History shows that, from remote ages, the Scots would descend from their heather and associate together on the flat for predatory purposes, which now take the form of raiding the world in all departments of life—and governments. But at intervals your race, more than others, feels the necessity for owning itself. Therefore, it returns in groups to its heather, where, under camouflage of "games" and "gatherings", it fortifies itself with the rites, passwords, raiment, dances, food, and drink of its ancestors and reinitiates itself into its primal individualism. These ceremonies, as the Southern races know to their cost, give its members fresh strength for renewed forays.

And that same strength is your third and chief blessing. I have already touched on the privilege of being broken by birth, custom, precept, and example to "doing without things". There is where the sons of the small houses, who have borne the yoke in their youth, hold a cumulative advantage over those who have been accustomed to life with broad margins. Such men can, and do, accommodate themselves to straitened circumstances at a pinch and for an object; but they are as aware of their efforts afterward as an untrained man is aware of his muscles on the second morning of a walking-tour; and when they have won through what they consider hardship they are apt to waste good time and place by subconsciously approving, or even remembering, their own efforts. On the other hand, the man who

has been used to shaving, let us say, in cold water at seven o'clock the year round, takes what one may call the minor damnabilities of life in his stride without either making a song about them or writing home about them. And that is the chief reason why the untrained man always has to pay more for the privilege of owning himself than the man trained to the little things. It is the little things, in microbes or morale, that make us, as it is the little things that break us.

Also, men in any walk of life who have been taught not to waste or muddle material under their hand are less given to muddle or mishandle moral, intellectual, and emotional issues than men whose wastage has never been checked, or who look to have their wastage made good by others. The proof is plain. Among the generations that have preceded you at this University were men of your own blood—many, and many—who did their work on the traditional sack of peasemeal or oatmeal behind the door—weighed out and measured with their own hands against the cravings of their natural appetites. These were men who intended to own themselves, in obedience to some dream, teaching, or word which had come to them. They knew that it would be a hard and long task, so they set about it with their own iron rations on their own backs: and they walked along the sands here to pick up driftwood to keep the fire going in their lodgings.

Now what, in this world or the next, can the world, or any Tribe in it, do with or to people of this temper? Bribe them by good dinners to take larger views on life? They would probably see their hosts under the table first and argue their heads off afterward. Offer 'em money to shed a conviction or two? A man doesn't

lightly sell what he has paid for with his hide. Stampede them or coax them or threaten them into countenancing the issue of false weights and measures? It is a little hard to liberalise persons who have done their own weighing and measuring with broken teacups by the light of tallow candles. No! Those thrifty souls must have been a narrow and an anfractuous breed to handle; but, by their God, in Whose Word they walked, they owned themselves! And their ownership was based upon the truth that if you have not your own rations you must feed out of your Tribe's hands: with all that that implies.

Should any of you care to own yourselves on these lines your insurances ought to be effected in those first ten years of a young man's life, when he is neither seen nor heard. This is the period—one mostly spends it in lodgings alone—which corresponds to the time when man in the making began to realise that he was himself and not another. The post-war world which discusses so fluently and frankly the universality and cogency of Sex as the dominant factor of life has adopted a reserved and modest attitude in its handling of the imperious and inevitable details of mere living and working. I will respect that attitude.

The initial payments on the policy of one's independence, then, must be financed, by no means for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith towards oneself, primarily out of the drinks that one does not too continuously take; the maidens in whom one does not too extravagantly rejoice; the entertainments that one does not too systematically attend or conduct; the transportation one does not too magnificently employ; the bets one does not too generally place, and the

objects of beauty and desire that one does not too generously buy. Secondarily, those revenues can be added to by extra work undertaken at hours before or after one's regular work, when one would infinitely rather rest or play. That involves the question of how far you can drive yourself without breaking down, and if you do break down how soon you can recover and carry on again. This is for you to judge, and to act accordingly.

No one regrets—no one has regretted—more than I that these should be the terms of the policy. It would better suit the spirit of the age if personal independence could be guaranteed for all by some form of co-ordinated action combined with public assistance and so forth. Unfortunately, there are still a few things in this world that a man must manage for himself; his own independence is one of them; and the obscure, repeated shifts and contrivances and abstentions necessary to the manufacture of it are too personal and intimate to expose to the inspection of any Department, however sympathetic.

If you have a temperament that can accommodate itself to cramping your style while you are thus saving, you are lucky. But, any way, you will be more or less uncomfortable until it presently dawns on you that you have put enough by to give you food and housing for, say, one week ahead. It is both sedative and antispasmodic—it makes for calm in the individual and forbearance towards the Tribe—to know that you hold even seven days' potential independence in reserve—and owed to no man. One is led on to stretch that painfully extorted time to one month if possible; and as one sees that this is possible, the possibilities grow. Bit by bit, one builds up and digs oneself into a base

whence one can move in any direction, and fall back upon in any need. The need may be merely to sit still and consider, as did our first ancestors, what manner of animal we are; or it may be to cut loose at a minute's notice from a situation which has become intolerable or unworthy; but, whatever it may be, it is one's own need, and the opportunity of meeting it has been made by one's own self.

After all, yourself is the only person you can by no possibility get away from in this life, and, may be, in another. It is worth a little pains and money to do good to him. For it is he, and not our derivatively educated minds or our induced emotions, who preserves in us the undefeated senior instinct of independence. You can test this by promising yourself not to do a thing, and noticing the scandalous amount of special pleading that you have to go through with yourself if you break your promise. A man does not always remember, or follow up, the great things that he has promised himself or his friends to do; but he rarely forgets or forgives when he had promised himself not to do even a little thing. This is because man has lived with himself as an individual vastly longer than he has lived with himself under Tribal conditions. Consequently, facts about his noble solitary self and his earliest achievements had time to get well fixed in his memory. He knew he was not altogether one with the beasts. His amazing experiences with his first lie had shown him that he was something of a magician, if not a miracle-worker; and his first impulse towards self-denial for ends not immediately in sight must have been a revelation of himself to himself as stupendous as a belief in a future life, which it was possibly intended to herald.

It is only natural, then, that individuals who first practised this apparently insane and purposeless exercise came later to bulk in the legends of their tribe as demigods, who went forth and bearded the gods themselves for gifts—for fire, wisdom, or knowledge of the arts.

But one thing that stands outside exaggeration or belittlement, through all changes in shapes of things and the sounds of words, is the bidding, the guidance that drives a man to own himself and upholds him through his steps on that road. The bidding comes, direct as a beam of light, from that past when man had grown into his present shape, which past, could we question it, would probably refer us to a past immeasurably remoter still, whose creature, not yet man, felt within him that it was not well for him to jackal round another brute's kill, even if he went hungry for a while. It is not such a far cry from that Creature, howling over his empty stomach in the dark, to the Heir of all the Ages counting over his coppers in front of a cookshop to see if they will run to a full meal—as some few here have had to do; and the principle is the same—"At any price that I can pay, let me own myself".

And the price is worth paying if you keep what you have bought. For the eternal question still is whether the profit of any concession that a man makes to his Tribe, against the light that is in him, outweighs or justifies his disregard of that light. A man may apply his independence to what is called worldly advantage, and discover too late that he laboriously has made himself dependent on a mass of external conditions for the maintenance of which he sacrificed himself. So he may be festooned with the whole haberdashery of success, and go to his grave a castaway. Some men hold that

the risk is worth taking. Others do not. It is to these that I have spoken.

"And make the council of thy heart to stand; for there is none more faithful unto thee than it. For a man's soul is sometime wont to bring him tidings; more than seven watchmen that sit on high on a watch-tower."

XXV

THE CLASSICS AND THE SCIENCES

A. "I, a believer, look upwards, drinking in the deep-breathed words of the Gods, who unravel mysteries." B. "And I, denying the Gods, look downwards at the mysteries under my hands and eyes." C. "Both of you have missed the matter, seeing that the Gods are, in each case, present."

THE CLASSICS AND THE SCIENCES

University College, Dundee: October 1923

I HAVE listened with very mixed emotions to Miss Strachan's flattering estimate of me and what I have done. There was one moment when it seemed to me that Miss Strachan was disposed, with your assent, to count me as a blessing. In return—it comes from the bottom of my heart—I hope that each and every one of you will find one person in the world before you die who can live with you and count you a blessing. I find myself in an awkward position. But I am consoled by the thought that I am not the only person who has said one thing one day and another the next. My Rectorial Address dealt entirely with the advantage of independence as a possession necessary and desirable in itself. To-day I come before you, equally convinced of the necessity and desirability of interdependence combined with association and union. As is usual in such a dilemma, I defend myself by the time-honoured formula: "I have nothing to add, and nothing to retract". Circumstances, as the doctor, the pure scientist, and the pure politician tell us, alter cases. The case of the University College of Dundee and the University of St. Andrews is this: The end to which men in both centres are working is towards the most complete association, the strongest sympathy between St. Andrews, with its long history and tradition, and this College worthily designed to meet the needs of to-day and to-morrow,

growing up beside St. Andrews to heaped honour and high tradition of her own. The goal is that her sons shall look back with equal pride and affection on College and University alike and, in their day and time there, shall consciously rejoice in them both. I set aside the immediate value to any college of access to University degrees, for, outside of this very real advantage, one can perceive the immense possibilities that the future holds, in equal, intimate, intellectual union and comprehension between this College and the University. Their differences of outlook are, after all, merely complementary. You follow, for the most part, Natural Science and Medicine, which schools as you know, were first opened when Prometheus brought down fire from heaven and Epimetheus burnt his fingers in it. St. Andrews, through time and prescription, had leaned more towards the classics, which, though craftily hidden in the decent obscurity of dead tongues, are in essence somewhat more advanced than all the morning papers. Your professors demonstrate to you scientifically that in matter there is no new thing under the sun. St. Andrews proves the same fact philosophically in the region of the mind. These almost parallel views combined give, as it were, a stereoscopic view of life, showing it in full light and shade, with God's atmosphere about it, instead of as mere pictures on paper. More and more is our world, fresh from the shadow of death, beginning to understand that it contains matters enough for all minds to explore, wonder, delight in, and to interpret with every gift of reason, daring, and reverence that they may possess. Only, since a man's work, to be any use, takes the whole of him, men are subdued to what they work in, and become impatient of or uninterested

in the effort and idea of others in other fields. That is why all we shoemakers think that there is nothing like leather—and leave our lasts to say so! But there has always been a middle way between the attitude of Swammerdam, half-crazed at the sight of the marvels his microscope showed him in a drop of water, shutting his notebook and vowing such revelations were not to be communicated to mankind; and of that other extreme of mind which rationalises over phenomena inexplicable, and because it has given them names would deliver judgement on the secret springs of life, death, and motive in men.

Some seats of learning say that they are developing in their sons the spirit that shall take full count and advantage of high faith and cold reason alike. Of that I cannot judge. But of this I am sure—that you hold under your hand unequalled chances for begetting such a spirit in the combined life, thought, and work of the College and the University. For you are stationed here in the heart of a vigorous and many-minded people—in a city opulent, energetic, experienced in the application of means to practical ends, and touching, through a myriad interests and dealings, the ends of all the earth. This is a keen and tense atmosphere rightly reflected in the life of your College. On the other hand, you have within artillery range the ancient University less touched than you by these surroundings or considerations, less impelled than you to the forefront of material strife and inquiry, but maintaining always her secular reserve of accumulated wisdom, which modulates knowledge, and that detachment of view which directs, but does not destroy, human sympathies with all aspects of life. Dundee and St. Andrews are necessary, and, in the

present posture of the world's dislocated thought and action, vitally necessary, to each other. There seems to me, then, an ideal marriage; but, like most marriages, it depends for much of its happiness upon material considerations. Gentlemen of Dundee, makers of the city's fortune, merchant-princes—they tell me that the bride here is ill-dowered. Is it because she has grown up unnoticed, among you so long that she has to take the world with no full sufficiency of gear to be proud of? The standard of living has risen? The more reason, then, that the standard of thought should rise with it. From what I have seen and felt of the life of the Students' Union at St. Andrews, it has occurred to me that your city might fitly give to her children here their own lodge of the young men, their own temple of youth, where young men associated together even for childish things, may realise what manner of corporate spirit they serve now, and to what compelling idea they are under obligation in the future. It is not easy to make these things plain in the crowded life and ways of a vast city to busy students coming and going to their homes at the day's end. But give them their own dining halls and gathering grounds, and that divine spirit of youth, which seeks only an outlet, will create all the rest—lightly, unconsciously, but enduringly.

You and I have seen many men ruined by mere money thrown at them without thought. But independent men who have elected to be bound to hard work till their life's end take little harm from being given the best equipment, the best thought-out set of working-tools that can fit them for their callings. There is room for such equipment, whether it be instruments, laboratories, halls, or new wings to existing buildings; and since a

gift is of no avail unless the giver comes with it, there is room for interest, pride, and care. I agree with you that the present moment, when the key-industry of Great Britain is tax-gathering, is not best chosen for an appeal. You will observe, therefore, that I make no appeal. I merely suggest to you opportunity to advance the honour and interest of your University College. It may also be that the name and line of some of you must now die out for lack of succession. Seeing what great things the dead have done, you may desire to keep that name alive among young men in memory of some son of yours who should have borne it. If so, your road is open.

But it is to the living that we must look, and, though much has been taken away, yet to us who have still the light of the sun and the darkness of earth to deal with, much has been given. And as surely as Science is real and Faith is true, so surely much is required of us.

XXVI

WORK IN THE FUTURE

Distant is that tomb of granite under the Sun, which holds two hearts, each impotent without the other. Now that they are reunited, look for a new Star to be born!

WORK IN THE FUTURE

Rhodes Dinner, Oxford: June 1924

ON REFLECTION—such reflection as such a dinner as this induces—it strikes me that the toast I have to propose is more than usually superfluous. It is too easy. All I have to do for the next few minutes is to wish you prosperity. All you have to do for the next few years is to go out and get it. As, of course, you will. Indeed, you cannot very well escape doing so. Your path has been smoothed for just that end.

When Mr. Rhodes was brooding over his scheme of the scholarships, he used to say: "The game is to get them to knock up against each other *qua* students. After they've done that for three years at Oxford they'll never forget it *qua* individuals." Accordingly he so arranged what he called his "game" that each man, bringing with him that side of his head which belonged to the important land of his birth, was put in the way of getting another side to his head by men belonging to other not unimportant countries.

It is an asset towards prosperity, even for those whose lot will be cast altogether in one land, to get full and first-hand information about the men they will meet later. You know the formula better than I. The style of a man's play, plus the normal range of his vices, divided by the square of his work, and multiplied by the co-efficient of his nationality, gives, not only his po-

tential resistance under breaking-strain, but indicates, within a few points, how far he may be trusted to pull off a losing game. This knowledge can only be acquired in the merciless intimacy of one's early days. After that, one has to guess at the worth of one's friends or enemies; but youth, which, between ourselves, sometimes knows almost as much about some things as it thinks it always does about everything, can apply its own tests on its own proving-grounds, and does not forget the results.

Rhodes and Jameson, for example, did not draw together impersonally over the abstract idea of Imperial service. They had tried each other out long before, across the poker-tables of the Kimberley Club, beside the death-beds of friends, and among the sudden and desperate emergencies of life on the Diamond Fields. So when their work began, neither had to waste time in reading up the other's references. They simply fell into step side by side, and there remained till death parted them.

May something like their experience be yours with your friends here and throughout all your world. For you are exploring and assaying the minds of countries as well as of men. You have had samples of all the English-speaking teams to play with and against at leisure, in a cool grey atmosphere which gives full value to all attitudes—even to the attitude of the youngest and most rampant reformer who comes up fresh and fresher each year. When the scholarships were first created, one was afraid that Mr. Rhodes's large and even-handed mixing up of unrelated opposites might infect weaker souls with the middle-aged failings of toleration, impartiality, or broad-mindedness. And you

know, gentlemen, that when these symptoms break out on a young man, it is a sure sign of early death or—of a leaning towards unpractical politics. Fortunately, what one has seen and heard since then proves that one's fears were groundless.

There is a certain night, among several, that I remember, not long after the close of the War, when a man from Melbourne and a man from Montreal set themselves to show a couple of men from the South and Middle West that the Constitution of the United States was not more than 150 years out of date. At the same time, and in the same diggings, a man from California was explaining to a man from the Cape, with the help of some small hard apples, that no South African fruit was fit to be sold in the same market with the Californian product. The ring was kept by an ex-private of Balliol who, having eaten plum-and-apple jam in the trenches for some years, was a bigoted anti-fruitarian. He assured me that none of the disputants would be allowed to kill each other, because they were all wanted whole on the river next day; but even with murder barred, there was no trace of toleration till exhaustion set in. Then somebody made a remark which (I have had to edit it a little) ran substantially as follows: "Talking of natural resources, doesn't it strike you that what we've all got most of is howling provincialism?" That would have delighted Rhodes. It was just the sort of thing he himself would have jerked out, half aloud, at a Cabinet meeting, and expanded for minutes afterwards. There must be other phrases also, perhaps even more direct, which have equally emerged from the peace and quiet of such gatherings as the one which I attended. If that be so, you might do worse than use

them at a pinch, later on, as passwords among your associates throughout the world.

I suggest this because, when you move up into the line, and the Gods who sell all things at a price are dealing you your places and your powers, you may find it serviceable, for ends outside yourself, to remind a friend on the far side of the world of some absurd situation or trivial event which parallels the crisis or the questions then under your hands. And that man, in his station, remembering when and how the phrase was born, may respond to all that it implies—also for ends not his own. None can foresee on what grounds, national or international, some of you here may have to make or honour such an appeal; whether it will be for tangible help in vast material ventures, or for aid in things unseen; whether for a little sorely needed suspension of judgement in the councils of a nation as self-engrossed as your own; or, more searching still, for orderly farewells to be taken at some enforced parting of the ways. Any one of these issues may sweep to you across earth in the future. It will be yours to meet it with sanity, humour, and the sound heart that goes with a sense of proportion and the memory of good days shared together.

For you will be delivered to life in a world where, at the worst, no horror is now incredible, no folly unthinkable, no adventure inconceivable. At the best, you will have to deal and be dealt with by communities impatient of Nature, idolatrous of mechanisms, and sick of self-love to the point, almost, of doubting their own perfections. The Gods, whom they lecture, alone know what these folk will do or think. And here, gentlemen, let me put before you the seductive possibility that

some of you may end your days in refuges for the mentally afflicted—*not* because you will necessarily be more insane than you are at present, but because you will have preached democracy to democracies resolute that never again shall their peace be troubled by Demos. Yet, out of all this welter, you will arrive at prosperity, as youth, armour-plated by its own absorption in itself, has always arrived. In truth, there is but one means by which you can miss it, and that is, if you try to get the better of the Gods who sell everything at a price. They continue to be just Gods, and should you hold back even a fraction of the sum asked for your heart's desire, they will say nothing, but they will furnish you with a substitute that would deceive the elect—that will deceive even you until it is too late. So, I would advise you to pay them in full; making a note that goods obtained for personal use cost rather more than those intended for the honour and advancement of others.

My apology for mentioning these sordid bonds is that I saw the man in whose dream you move, pay the price which the Gods demanded of him, for his heart's desire. And now I see some portion of his reward. It is your prosperity.

XXVII

SHIPPING

When I used the Sea to sail toy-boats, all its waters were not wide enough. Now, knowing its deeps, the sound of one little wave turning over, makes me horribly afraid.

SHIPPING

Chamber of Shipping Annual Dinner: February 1925

I BELIEVE it is not an offence, under the Use and Custom of the Sea, for shippers to offer a steamer more freight than she can carry: but, if the steamer accepts, and overloads accordingly, it is an offence for which the steamer is responsible. But I never realised what a responsibility this was till I accepted your invitation to speak to the toast that stands in my name tonight.

This may be a confession of weakness, but it is a lucky man, not to say ship, that has only one weakness; and among my many weaknesses has been an early, acute, and abiding interest in the Mercantile Marine. I have seen its work. I have watched some of its performances from various craft, including gilt-edged liners, where every effort is made to persuade passengers that they are not at sea, but in a much safer place. I am unworthy of those efforts. For when I embark on such a vessel I know I have only to leave the Tudor grill-room, take the electric lift upstairs, and look out of the window of the more or less Perpendicular library on the top floor, and I shall see that same old grey wolf, the Ocean that harried our forefathers, waiting outside. It is not for me to teach you your business, but believe me, gentlemen, a ship is a ship, and you cannot get away from it.

In the same way this island of ours is a ship, as much as H. M. S. Ascension, with the additional disadvan-

tage of being moored between two Continents, so that we can enjoy the weather, political and otherwise, from both. Furthermore, H. M. S. Great Britain carries a passenger list, including stowaways, of forty-five millions, and, owing to peculiarities of her construction, there are never more than six weeks' supplies of consumable stores aboard her at one time. The balance must come by ship, and if the shipping does not come, a fortnight would deliver us to panic indescribable, and three months would see us embarked on the gallant adventure of cannibalism. These are the facts which underlie the camouflage of our existence on H. M. S. Great Britain. Naturally, they do not trouble the passengers aboard her, any more than the sight of the sea worries the passengers on your floating palaces.

But once in a while something happens at sea to remind us that a ship can be lost in a few hours. And, on land, we have seen all the Russias—one-sixth of the land-area of the globe—drive under in a few years.

Now, ships are lost for all sorts of reasons, some of which may even appear in the Admiralty Court depositions, but when a nation is lost the underlying cause of the collapse is always that she cannot handle her transport. Everything in life, from marriage to manslaughter, turns on the speed and cost at which men, things, and thoughts can be shifted from one place to another. If you can tie up a nation's transport you can take her off your books.

We have suffered from one scientific attempt to prove this, which very nearly succeeded. For the moment, however, there is a lull in the wars fought with visible weapons. We are deep now in that world-war which aims to destroy the spirit and will of man in his home and at

his work. One sound man whose morale can be gassed and gangrened in time of peace till he condones and helps to create every form of confusion that will ruin himself and his neighbour, is doing his country infinitely more harm than a thousand casualties on the battlefield. It is cheaper to induce your enemy to cut his own throat for what you have persuaded him are lofty motives than to do it for him against his will. And this is the essence of the New Model War—to create ill-will, which is the mother of despair, and through that ill-will to exploit the damnable streak in each of us which leads us to stop our own work and talk about the duties of others. The rest follows by itself.

The aftermath of the war, which still hangs round us like mustard-gas, helps this attack. For if you have driven a densely crowded, highly civilised population through the whole cycle of primitive emotions, they are bound to come out of it shaken to the core of their souls; and in that state they are as open to moral and mental infection as a tired man is to influenza. So we have, now, H. M. S. Great Britain crowded to the rails with passengers—some of them storm-sick, many of them ship-stale—who get in each other's light at every turn, and spend their time telling each other how the ship ought to be run.

To argue with them is useless. It only sends up their temperatures. Our sane attitude towards each other must be that of good-will—a good-will just a little more persistent, just a little more indefatigable than the ill-will which is being fabricated elsewhere. For if good-will can once more be made normal, with it must return that will to work which is the trade-mark of established health in a people. If the will to work be too long de-

layed, then, all that our race has made or stands for must pass into the hand of whatever nation first recovers that will.

Our recovery has been held back by the propaganda of ill-will and despair that is meant to wreck all effort at its source. But, do you think the engines of H. M. S. Great Britain can be adapted to burn this kind of fuel? *I* don't. Our lives for the past few years may have done for some of us what Government Control of trade in the war did for some big firms—knocked us off taking risks in the open market on small margins. There is no denying that a good many men *have* ceased to "quote fine". But the old individual instincts in us are not smothered. At heart we are all gamblers born, and the odds in favour of self-chosen, decontrolled lives are more and more worth taking. For men have grown a little tired of being told off to hate their neighbours by numbers, at the word of command. This reaction may or may not mark a turn of the tide, but, at least, it gives a time of slack-water, during which H. M. S. Great Britain may begin to get under way again and work up to the higher pressures.

And think of the stakes! Think, too, with what an astounding equipment we are now able to play for them. By comparison it was only yesterday that, when a ship was once under the horizon, she passed beyond help or call for, perhaps, half a year. To-day a tramp cannot report a cockroach-leg in a slide-valve without half the North Atlantic coming to her help. Months have been cut down to weeks, and weeks to days in the transport of men and things; and, unless all signs fail, we are on the edge of further unbelievable cuts in time. The transport of thought, which carries with it man's

most intimate associations, has outstripped, not only belief, but the speed of thought itself. Even now, it is an accepted diversion for men and women half across the world to listen to Big Ben strike in London. Before long, any man in any quarter of the Empire will be able to call for and be answered by the voice of his own birthplace at its work or play. Everywhere time and space are coming to heel round us to fetch and carry for our behoof, in the wilderness or the market. And that means that it will be possible for us now, as never before, to fuse our Empire together in thought and understanding as closely as in the interchange of men and things.

And it was the Shipping Industry which, from the first, sought out, found, built up, and bound together the entire fabric of what is now our Empire. This it did at hazard, unsupported, in hope of trade, or led by some dream of new roads across new seas. The Shipping Industry is the mother of the Old Navy as it is the sister of the New; in sober, daily fact, the mainstay of our prosperity and our very lives, and in Law, I believe, "a common carrier." What burden it bears now, what heavier burden the future may lay upon it, you who inherit its present direction know better than the careless world you serve. We see only that there has never been any malice of wind or weather, or of the King's many enemies, or of the turn of the markets in a thousand years, that the Shipping Industry has not met and ridden out.

And now H. M. S. Great Britain rides to cross-seas. Is it any wonder that we look to you once more to help us build up and bind together, against the new day, those old individual qualities which gave our race its ability to see far and its audacity to "quote fine"?

XXVIII

STATIONERY

A. "Which is the greater sinner, Rhadamanthus—he who beats soft iron into smooth swords that all can use, or he who beats soft reeds into smooth, all-serving paper?" B. "Chain the two together, till they settle it between them."[1]

STATIONERY

Worshipful Company of Stationers: July 1925

YOU have referred with great indulgence to an author of my name. An hour ago I admit I was that author; but, thanks to the high honour which you have done me, I am now a Stationer, duly entered and obligated.

This is a heavy responsibility; for one cannot deny that the world might have been happier if stationery had never been invented. Yet it must have been a brother of our mystery—an original Hieratic Stationer—who first discovered that if you soak the leaves of the papyrus plant in the muddy waters of the Nile, and beat upon them with a mallet, the beastly stuff sticks together and makes what looks like paper. So we called it paper, and we supplied it as stationery, and men began to write upon it with reed pens. And when, in the course of time, we had rooted every green thing out of the Valley of the Nile; when we had killed the fatted calf, and the unfatted calf, and the calf unborn to make vellum; we tore the very rags off the backs of beggars, and we ground them and we pulped them to make more and more stationery. Why did we do that? Because some desperate soul, impatient of the slow, beautiful handicrafts of the past, had invented an apparatus called the printing-press. But, a printing-press without paper being as innocuous as an unloaded gun, we instantly charged it with stationery—the magnificent paper of

Caxton's time—and we improved the machine itself; and we devised special inks for it; and we created the business of publishing and distribution; and among us we launched the Eleventh Plague on suffering humanity.

Since that dreadful date there has not been a crime in the Decalogue, from anonymous letter-writing to the spread of idealism, which we have not fostered, facilitated, and democratised. Incidentally, too, we have turned life into the nightmare of a never-empty waste-paper basket.

It is true that our ministrations have prevented, or diverted, authors from reciting their works aloud at street corners. But I hold that, with a little patience, the increase of motor-traffic would have accomplished this end for mankind quite as effectively.

It is true, also, that our existence was forced on us by that providential itch for self-expression which afflicts poets, playwrights, politicians, and—other story-tellers. For, sirs, ye know that by *their* craft ye have your wealth. Yet it is to our credit that the Stationers' Company has striven to mitigate some of the evils it has abetted. In ancient days, for instance, at the behest of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Bishop of London, it was our duty not only to black out objectionable passages from the works of objectionable authors, but also to break up the furniture and melt down the types of obnoxious printers. Unluckily the bases of criticism have widened since then; and I am told that I need not look forward to even an honorary share in these righteous delights. For authors, nowadays, may print what, where, and how they choose. And most of them do.

Man is always at war with, or wondering over, himself or his neighbours, or his gods; and he must needs tell all three what he thinks about them. Through the ages the net output of his dreams and imaginings has come to be known as Literature. Nevertheless, many men have given all that they possessed of passion, experience, and art to the making of it. Some have given their integrity also. Their individual names and fortunes concern the world as little as the share of a single coral-insect in building up the Great Barrier Reef of Australia which withstands the tide of the Pacific. But the fabric of the work to which they gave themselves is the one human creation which withstands time. And in no land has there been more wasteful or more superb giving than in England. Their work may at the last be found imperishable, or shown to be mere detritus of ancient thought fashioned and re-fashioned by the generations as they passed. That has been for the world—not for us—to judge.

Our Records of Stationers' Hall pronounce no opinion. Impartial as the Recording Angel, they have entered and preserved for our race all the title-deeds of our great inheritance.

XXIX

FICTION

Gold and Gems we may steal—melt down, re-cut and re-sell them.
All that we need is the Fire. That we must find in ourselves.

FICTION

Royal Literary Society: June 1926

I AM sure that to-morrow every member of my craft will be grateful, Lord Balfour, that in your many-sided career you have never thought to compete in the ranks of professed workers in fiction.

As regards the subject, not the treatment, of Lord Balfour's speech, I think we may take it, gentlemen, that the evening light is much the same for all men. When the shadows lengthen one contrasts what one had intended to do in the beginning with what one has accomplished. That the experience is universal does not make it any less acid—especially when, as in my case, one has been extravagantly rewarded for having done what one could not have helped doing.

But recognition by one's equals and betters in one's own craft is a reward of which a man may be unashamedly proud—as proud as I am of the honour that comes to me to-night from your hands. For I know with whom you have seen fit to brigade me in the ranks of Literature. The fiction that I am worthy of that honour be upon your heads!

Yet, at least, the art that I follow is not an unworthy one. For Fiction is Truth's elder sister. Obviously. No one in the world knew what truth was till someone had told a story. So it is the oldest of the arts, the mother of history, biography, philosophy dogmatic (or doubtful, Lord Balfour), and, of course, of politics.

Fiction began when some man invented a story about another man. It developed when another man told tales about a woman. This strenuous epoch begat the first school of destructive criticism, as well as the First Critic, who spent his short but vivid life in trying to explain that a man need not be a hen to judge the merits of an omelette. He died; but the question he raised is still at issue. It was inherited by the earliest writers from their unlettered ancestors, who also bequeathed to them the entire stock of primeval plots and situations —those fifty ultimate comedies and tragedies to which the Gods mercifully limit human action and suffering.

This changeless aggregate of material workers in fiction through the ages have run into fresh moulds, adorned and adapted to suit the facts and the fancies of their own generation. The Elizabethans, for instance, stood on the edge of a new and wonderful world filled with happy possibilities. Their descendants, 350 years later, have been shot into a world as new and as wonderful, but not quite as happy. And in both ages you can see writers raking the dumps of the English language for words that shall range farther, hit harder, and explode over a wider area than the service-pattern words in common use.

This merciless search, trial, and scrapping of material is one with the continuity of life which, we all know, is as a tale that is told, and which writers feel should be well told. All men are interested in the reflection of themselves and their surroundings, whether in the pure heart of a crystal or in a muddy pool; and nearly every writer who supplies a reflection secretly desires a share of immortality for the pains he has been at in holding up the mirror—which also reflects himself. He may

win his desire. Quite a dozen writers have achieved immortality in the past 2500 years. From a bookmaker's —a real bookmaker's—point of view the odds are not attractive, but Fiction is built on fiction. That is where it differs from the other Arts.

Most of the Arts admit the truth that it is not expedient to tell everyone everything. Fiction recognises no such bar. There is no human emotion or mood which it is forbidden to assault—there is no canon of reserve or pity that need be respected—in fiction. Why should there be? The man, after all, is not telling the truth. He is only writing fiction. While he writes it, his world will extract from it just so much of truth or pleasure as it requires for the moment. In time a little more, or much less, of the residue may be carried forward to the general account, and there, perhaps, diverted to ends of which the writer never dreamed.

Take a well-known instance. A man of overwhelming intellect and power goes scourged through life between the dread of insanity and the wrath of his own soul warring with a brutal age. He exhausts mind, heart, and brain in that battle: he consumes himself, and perishes in utter desolation. Out of all his agony remains one little book, his dreadful testament against his fellow-kind, which to-day serves as a pleasant tale for the young under the title of *Gulliver's Travels.* That, and a faint recollection of some baby-talk in some love-letters, is as much as the world has chosen to retain of Jonathan Swift, Master of Irony. Think of it! It is like tuning-down the glare of a volcano to light a child to bed!

The true nature and intention, then, of a writer's work does not lie within his own knowledge. And we

know that the world makes little allowance for any glory of workmanship which a writer spends on material that does not interest. So it would seem that Fiction is one of the few "unsheltered" occupations, in that there is equal victimisation on both sides, and no connection between the writer's standard of life, his output, or his wages.

Under these conditions has grown up in England a literature lavish in all aspects—lavish with the inveterate unthrift of the English, who are never happy unless they are throwing things away. By virtue of that same weakness, or strength, it overlaps so sumptuously that one could abstract and bestow from the mere wastage of any literary age since Chaucer's enough of abundance and enjoyment to quicken half a world. Those who study in the treasure-houses of its past know what unregarded perfection of workmanship and what serene independence of design often went to fabricate the least among those treasures. And they know, also, the insolence of the greatest Masters, who were too pressed to wait on perfection in their haste to reveal to us some supreme jewel scarcely cleansed from the matrix. Our English literature, I think, has always been the expression of a race more anxious to deliver what was laid upon it than to measure the means and methods of delivery.

And this immense and profligate range of experience, invention, and passion is our incommunicable inheritance, which is drawn upon at every need, for multitudes who, largely, neither know nor care whence their need is met.

In every age some men gain temporary favour because they happen to have met a temporary need of their

age. Yet, as regards their future, they stand on a perfect equality with their fellow-craftsmen. It is not permitted to any generation to know what, or how much, of its effort will be carried forward to the honour and grace of our literature. The utmost a writer can hope is that there may survive of his work a fraction good enough to be drawn upon later, to uphold or to embellish some ancient truth restated, or some old delight reborn.

Admitting this, a man may, by the exercise of a little imagination, persuade himself that he has acquired merit in his lifetime. Or, if imagination be lacking, he may be led to that comfortable conclusion by the magic of his own art heard as we have heard it from Lord Balfour to-night, on the lips of a man wise in life, and a Master not ignorant of the power of words.

XXX

THE SPIRIT OF THE LATIN

Having sailed under the sun, they found, between steep forests and the glittering face of ocean, a people touching both worlds, learned and most courteous to strangers.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LATIN

Brazilian Academy of Letters, Rio de Janeiro: March 1927

MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT—In according to me this reception, your Academy confers on me the greatest of honours, and your colleague, Señor Gustav Barroso, has overwhelmed me with praise beyond my deserts. For I am—I have been—no more than a maker of tales and verses which have had the good fortune to interest and amuse. And where men are interested or amused, they pardon many faults; and, as you have done, they reward richly.

I count it always as one of the supreme rewards of my work that it has opened to me something of the aims and intentions of my fellow-craftsmen in various parts of the world.

Mes confrères, it is from this point of view that I am acutely interested in your prodigious land. As a man of letters I have reason. As an individual I have also a personal right, at which Señor Barroso has so eloquently hinted. You know the old saying: "Give me the first six years of a man's life, and I will give you all the rest". In my case that is true. I was born, and I passed my childhood and my early manhood within the Tropics who is a mother that never forgets her children however far they may travel. So I feel that I am not altogether a stranger at heart to men who have had the breath of the Equator about their cradles, and the sense of vast distances before their young feet.

If I cannot speak your language, that is no reason

that I cannot think some of your thoughts. It is possible indeed, that, by virtue of our birthright, you and I may look upon certain aspects of life from angles foreign to men who have been nursed beneath the North Star. It is possible, for the same reason, that you and I may be moved by hopes and apprehensions of which the North is not yet aware—much less informed. For you and I both know the lands and the life where Civilisation must stand on guard against the relentless challenge and defiance of Nature unsubdued that sweeps up to our very gates.

To us, neither sun, moon, earth, water nor the forest are as men see them and deal with them up above, on the shoulders of our planet.

That is on one side of our head—between ourselves. On the other, we affirm our solidarity with the rest of the world—that temperate world which puts on a thick coat when it looks at the stars.

But, whatever stars men may be born under, they are always immensely curious to know and be told how other men live, and what they think of the business of living. Never were they more curious than now, when the experiences of the past fifteen years have delivered upon them the shock, the burden, and the developments of a full century. It is a new world which each nation finds in itself and its neighbours to-day—a world, perhaps, of less reverence and belief, but surely of greater comprehension and larger acceptances than the old.

The wave of destruction that swamped it for so long is being followed by a new tide of creation which one already hears breaking on every shore. Mes confrères, I venture to think that this fresh tide will carry the galleons of Brazil very far.

To you has been granted the richness of an ancient and heroic culture superimposed on the vivid historical background of your Captains and flagbearers—those fierce and arrogant shades of your early conquests—who moved without fear among the mysteries of a land which has not yet revealed a tithe of her mysteries, even to you her sons. Added to this has been a life, intense, isolated, particular, on the one hand, and on the other intimately linked in intellectual, scientific, and economic achievement with the old world. For you, as in the British Empire, there is no extreme of the primitive or the cultured within your borders with which you have not come in contact, or from which you have not drawn contrast and inspiration. But, for you, there is no separation by the seas, of the component parts of your dominions to weaken or to deflect the national influence upon the whole. You have only to contend with oceans of land, seas of mountains and forests; and, in a not distant future, with the peril of limitless wealth poured into your lap by the Nature which you address yourselves more and more to dominate. Yours is a stupendous drama, set in theatres, such as this city and others, of almost unbelievable beauty, and destined to be carried to its triumphant fulfilment with the force, the fervour, and the passion of your own immense skies.

But we who serve the written word, may leave these merely material concerns to the years and the personalities that will give them birth and shape. It is to the tales and the songs—the thousand and one tales and songs—of every aspect and thought of life in this new world of yours that men will turn for the intimate and unconscious self-revelation of your national spirit and outlook upon which, in the end, the understanding, the sym-

pathy, and the admiration of your equals elsewhere will be based. And it is you who are partakers in the world-breath that stirs in all hearts to-day—you who specially share the reawakening of the Latin—who will give to the world these gifts, more precious and more enduring than any other treasure that men can offer to their fellow-men.

In this certainty I salute the Academy of Brazil, part of whose office it is to watch over and to forward these high destinies.

Señor Barroso, you have spoken of the secular friendship between our respective lands. I am a man of short views. I rarely look beyond two or three hundred years. It is, I think, close upon three hundred years since the father of all our English novelists—Daniel Defoe—first wrote those two magic words—"The Brazils"—which have blazed ever since as beacons of romance and adventure to generations of our youth. It is an equal space of time since our ancestors proved and accepted each other amicably on the high seas, and shared many desperate enterprises over the face of the earth. It is but a few years ago that Santos Dumont gave his life to prove that the air, as well as the sea, can bring us nearer. I argue, therefore, that, two hundred years hence, when the Rio-London mail arrives in forty-eight hours instead of fifteen days, we shall be found continuing untroubled in our ancient fruitful amity, and linked, it may be, by interests more extended and significant than those of the present day.

And I am perfectly sure that, three hundred years hence, Carnival in Rio, of which we are all, this evening, the exhausted survivors, will, like our national friendship, have lost nothing of its vigour. I count it part of

my good fortune that I have witnessed the phenomenon of an entire populace rejoicing in the strength and gaiety of life, and yet self-attuned to an exquisite courtesy and good-will.

And what can I say of the good-will shown to me on my too short visit to the threshold of your country, except that it has been as lavish as the beauty of land and sea and life that surrounds us. You have told me, Señor Barroso, that I should find myself among friends. That was true from the first hour—the first moments—of my arrival. And it is because of the grace, the open heart, and—may I say?—the almost affectionate cordiality of your welcome that I have spoken to you as a man speaks only in the house of his friends.

XXXI

OUR INDIAN TROOPS IN FRANCE

Worshipping Gods unknown (to us); oppressed by fears of Gods unknown (to them); in battle worthy to be rewarded for their valour by all (Gods).

OUR INDIAN TROOPS IN FRANCE

La Bassée: October 1927 (*Maréchal Foch presiding*)

WE ARE told that time softens the sense of loss. That may be possible, but I am sure that, as the actual memories of the War itself recede into the background of the years, we in England have come more and more to realise the patience, endurance, and good-will of that great Ally with whom we entered into the War, and with whom, under your final direction, Maréchal, we ended it. Patience, endurance, and good-will are not spectacular virtues, but they underlie the foundations of honour, respect, and enduring affection between nations as between individuals. It is in this atmosphere of trusted honour, unity, and confidence that we have this day unveiled on your soil our memorial to the Armies of India, who, like your own incomparable legions from the south and east of your Empire, followed our united standards into the War. Like your Armies, also, they were of a great simplicity and an utter loyalty—soldiers for whom there was no darker sin than that of being false to the salt of their obligation.

Our Secretary of State for India has touched on the material difficulties and bewilderments that met them in their adventure to the West. Have you ever thought what they endured on the spiritual side when they voyaged forth over oceans whose existence they had never conceived, into lands which lay beyond the extremest limits of their imagination, into countries

which, for aught they knew, were populated by devils and monsters? Columbus and his men, seeking new worlds, did not confront half the dread possibilities which these men of India prepared themselves to meet. And in that mood they came to France, and presently wrote letters home to their relatives and their friends trying to make clear to them the spirit of this new universe. Some of these letters I have read. I can testify it was not long before the essential humanity, honesty, good-will, and the sane thrift of France as an agricultural nation soothed their hearts and set their minds at rest.

One young man, whose letter I can quote almost textually, wrote, to reassure his mother, in these words: "Oh, my mother, do not be afraid. These people are as civilised as ourselves, and, above all, the women are as good agriculturists as the men. I have seen it. Their land passes from father to son on payment of the necessary taxes, precisely as it does with us. They buy and sell in the streets, too—portions of fowl and meat, with needles, thread, scissors, and matches, just as we do in our bazaars at home. Have, then, no more fear, for they are in all respects like ourselves."

That was but one soul among many of all races, castes, and religions whom the gracious spirit and reason of your country had conquered and put at ease. I wish that, in these few words, I could give you any idea of the extent and permanence of your conquest in India.

But these men have done their duty and passed on. There remains behind them the memorial to their dead, concerning which you, Maréchal, so eloquently spoke this morning.

That witness to their honour and fidelity we confide to France—to the age-old Power with whom, for a thousand years, we have been associated in the development and charge of the world's civilisation—which, together, we now guard!

THE END

In Essay & Gen. Lit. Index

[redacted]

Kipling, Rudyard

A book of words

[redacted]

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